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Six Flags opens DC Comics-themed dark rides at Texas, Missouri parks

Sally, Oceaneering, Alterface and Pure Imagination Studios brought together to create new interactive attractions

AT: Jeffrey Seifert

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ARLINGTON, Texas — On, Tuesday, May 19, 2015, Six Flags Over Texas previewed its newest attraction, Justice League: Battle for Metropolis, to the media, contest winners and local park enthusiasts. This world-class attraction combines state of the art motion vehicles, 3-D imaging, targeting technology and animatronics to give thrill seekers the opportunity to help the Justice League save Metropolis.

Nine days later, a nearly identical attraction opened at Six Flags St. Louis.

"We are excited to partner with the popular DC Comics characters to bring this level of unmatched, interactive thrills to our guests this season," said Park President Steve Martindale. "Justice League: Battle for Metropolis is like no other ride we've ever built. The technology is second to none and guests will be fully immersed in the action from start to finish."

Upon entering the queue,

Cyborg, the youngest member of the Justice League, informs guests that Lex Luthor and the Joker have teamed up to take control of Metropolis. The Justice League is in need of volunteers to join the reserve team and help rescue Super Girl, The Flash and Green Lantern who have already been captured. Intel suggests they are being held at LexCorp's headquarters and the plan is to break in and rescue them.

As Justice League reserve team members, riders travel in sleek six-passenger custom designed, motion-based vehicles and engage in a full-sensory battle, complete with 4D effects of fire, cannon blasts, and explosions all while experiencing hairpin, 360-degree turns.

Riders use interactive laser blasters and attempt to extinguish the 600 virtual and tangible targets featured throughout the attraction, including a life-like villain animatronic, robotic henchmen, helicopters, a hologram and an interactive fog screen. The realistic features take the ride gaming experience to an unprecedented level.

The Texas ride, with a cycle time of 3 minutes, 20 seconds, features 17 screens,

► See SIX FLAGS, page 4



Six Flags' new Justice League: Battle for Metropolis dark rides feature both 3-D interactive target imaging and lifelike animatronics, as seen here with The Joker, to further engage the riders into the storyline. The rides opened in May at Six Flags Over Texas and Six Flags St. Louis

COURTESY SIX FLAGS



Former President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter visited DelGrosso's Amusement Park in Tipton, Pa. on Memorial Day. Shown here in front of the park's historic Herschell-Spillman Carousel are from left: Fred DelGrosso (one of the owners of DelGrosso's Amusement Park); First Lady Rosalynn Carter; President Jimmy Carter and Carl Crider, Jr., DelGrosso's park president.

COURTESY DELGROSSO'S

Former President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn visit DelGrosso's

TIPTON, Pa. — Former President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn, along with members of their family, visited DelGrosso's Amusement Park in Tipton on Memorial Day — May 25, 2015.

The President was in the region to spend time over the Memorial Day Weekend at Spruce Creek, one of his favorite fishing spots. During their stay in nearby Warriors Mark, the couple and their family paid a visit to Tipton, taking in the sights, sounds and flavors of DelGrosso's Amusement Park. Owner Fred DelGrosso and his wife Cathy, who have known the former President and First Lady for several years, invited the Carters to tour their family's amusement park.

As part of the tour, the Carters enjoyed the Marvelous Mutts Dog Show, took in the beauty of the historic Herschell-Spillman Carousel, and checked out the newest park ride for 2015, The Rock Star. No trip to the park would be complete without a stop at La Famiglia Gift Shop and, of course, taste testing some of DelGrosso's famous amusement park food.

Fred DelGrosso remarked that, though numerous government officials, including U.S. Senators have visited DelGrosso's over the years, the stopover by the Carter family was the first ever Presidential visit to the park. "We are honored to have Tipton receive such distinguished guest," he said. "And it was a lot of fun too."

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NEWSTALK

OPINION: Tim Baldwin, tbaldwin@amusementtoday.com

Where credit is due



Baldwin

I'm a big fan of attention to detail. When it particularly exudes creativity, I am even more taken by such character. People who know me well know of my art education background. Because of such training, I am quick to notice imaginative touches on new attractions. While most properties can only envy the mega-budgets for theming found in parks of the Orlando ilk — and those parks are indeed fortunate — big bucks aren't always the necessity when it comes to theming. Creativity doesn't have to be expensive, it just needs to be...well, creative.

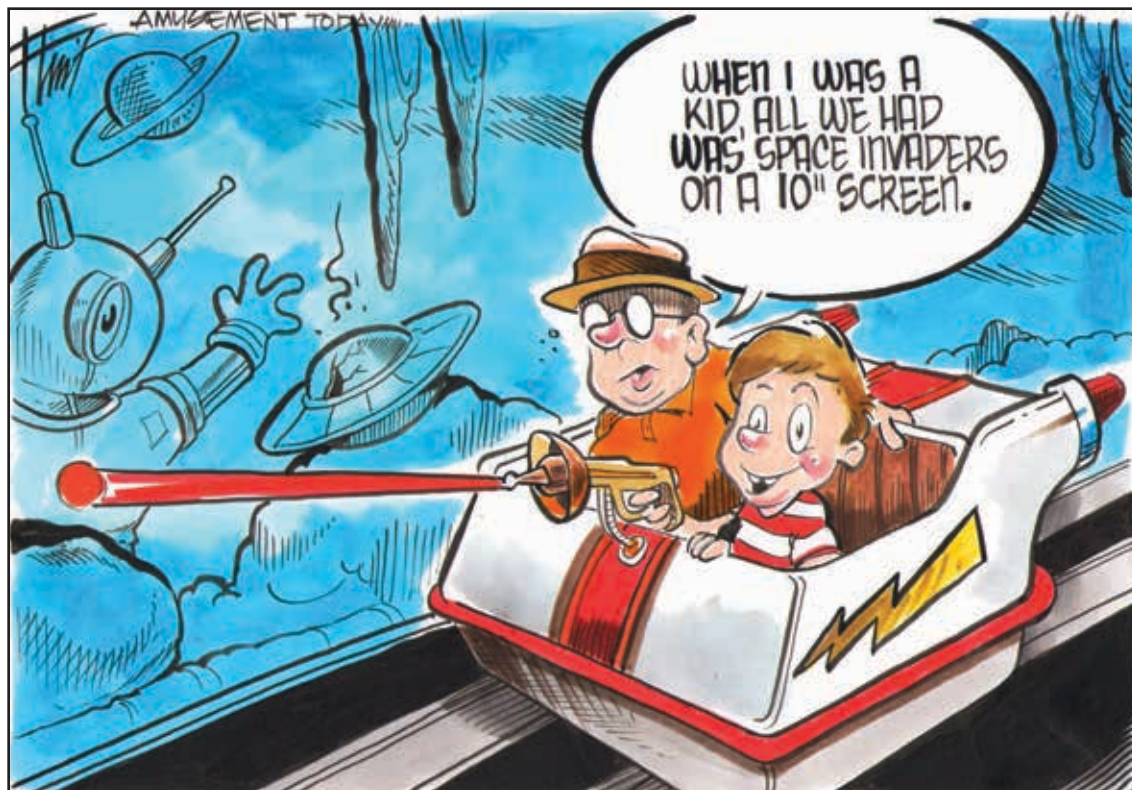
A case in point is Six Flags Magic Mountain's new ScreamPunk District. With a makeover of marvelous proportions on their Colossus wooden coaster (see story, page 22), the entire area received a fresh facelift. Steampunk décor has become somewhat of a popular style in recent years. With Magic Mountain's floorless B&M coaster, Scream, sitting adjacent to the new Twisted Colossus, the entire area has received a retro steampunk theme, cleverly titled the ScreamPunk District. Thematic touches are everywhere.

During the media preview, I watched one of the park's maintenance personnel add gold and copper touches to pipes spread throughout the loading platform. Copper knob wheels were added, for no other purpose than to look cool. And they do. I had to admit I was whimsically mesmerized by the simplicity of using the most basic of items and turning them into fascinating accents.

Even more so, the area is adorned with all sorts of steampunk gadgets, mostly of which the park would have considered sheer junk. A large washing machine from an old wardrobe department is now futuristic cool. An old tractor now looks like something straight out of Jules Verne. Pipes and wheels and gadgets of all kinds have given a long-neglected part of the park a whole new flavor. It carries on into a new sandwich shop, the exterior of the area's theater, and reflects the charm of street performers. Six Flags Magic Mountain is quick to give credit to Maintenance Director Tim Dofflow for his savvy handiwork.

The takeaway from this is a brilliant use of resources. Virtually every park has a bone yard. So how can a creative mind utilize such random leftovers? A thematic prop in a dark ride? A Halloween setting? A clever thematic twist to bring new life to an older attraction? The possibilities are vast.

FLINT'S VIEW: Bubba Flint



INDUSTRY OPINION: Scott Rutherford, srutherford@amusementtoday.com

The race is over

Carowinds shocked guests and coaster fans on Memorial Day weekend when it announced the imminent closing of its largest wooden roller coaster, Thunder Road. And they weren't waiting until the end of the 2015 season. Instead, the popular ride would be shut down during the height of a busy summer, taking its last passengers on July 26.

This news is especially puzzling for a number of reasons. It's known that a major expansion of the water park will soon spill over into a little-used section of the south parking lot. But this hardly justifies obliterating one of the park's most beloved attractions. Carowinds' sister parks (Canada's Wonderland and Kings Dominion) expanded their water parks and BOTH elected to build walkways through structures of neighboring wooden coasters, allowing guest easy access to the new areas.

And it's not as if Thunder Road is in disrepair. In fact, it's the exact opposite: the park was in the last stages of an expensive multi-year plan that saw the majority of the ride's structure and track completely rebuilt. Aside from a few small hills just before the

brake run, the coaster is running the fastest and smoothest it has since opening in 1976.

It's difficult for me to be objective about this decision since Carowinds has been my home park for most of my life, and I've been enjoying Thunder Road each of its 39 seasons. While wooden coasters did see a resurgence in popularity during the period when Thunder Road was built, that tide is now beginning to ebb. Some

wooden coasters are being transformed into steel-tracked hybrids while others are simply discarded. It seems the traditional wooden coaster is once more becoming an endangered species. Thankfully, wise operators of parks like Kennywood, Knoebels, Holiday World, Lagoon and others recognize the historic value of traditional wooden coasters. These few places may hold the future's last pure examples of this classic art form.

If Carowinds' owner Cedar Fair ignores vociferous guest protest over the loss of this ride and doesn't reconsider, Thunder Road will close just a few months short of its 40th anniversary. The race will be over and there will be no winners.



Rutherford

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2 MINUTE DRILL



COMPILED: Janice Witherow

Rich Kaman, Kaman's Art Shoppes, Inc.

Rich Kaman is the executive vice president of Kaman's Art Shoppes, Inc., the largest amusement and theme park concessionaire in the United States. The company provides souvenirs such as personalized art and photos, candy and specialty midway products like face painting, hair wraps and Henna tattoos. Rich is a hands-on owner with a solid background in setting up new operations. His wealth of experience, dedication to his craft and personal approach to doing business has made him a success in the amusement industry. Rich has a love of family and of his home state of Ohio.

Title:
Executive Vice President.

Number of years in the industry:
50 years!

Best thing about the industry:

By far, the people I get the opportunity to work with.

Favorite amusement park ride:
Magnum XL-200 roller coaster at Cedar Point.

If I wasn't working in the amusement industry, I would be...
Supervising in the medical equipment business.

Biggest challenge facing our industry:
The government increasing the minimum wage.

The thing I like most about the amusement park season is...
The challenges of opening each and every year.

Favorite sports team:
The Cleveland Browns.

Dream car:
BMW!

Three things on my summer "to do" list are...
Spend time with my new granddaughter; more time at Bay Point Beach (a beautiful area on the shores of Lake Erie in Ohio) and to visit my daughter in Philadelphia.



Rich Kaman with his wife, Tricia.

Favorite reality TV show:
I really don't watch reality TV!

On my lunch hour, I typically spend time...
Actually, I don't usually take a lunch hour.

Margaritas... on the rocks or frozen?
On the rocks!

Favorite flavor of ice cream:
Rocky Road.

The last time I wore a tuxedo was...
In 2010 at an awards dinner.

McDonald's or Burger King:
I'd have to say McDonald's.

Best buzz word:
I hate buzz words!

When I want to unwind, I...
Go to a sand bar and have a cold one.

You live in Ohio — what should everyone know about your home state?
Our lake and islands are a great secret.

Growing up, I wanted to be...
A professional baseball player.

My next vacation will be to ...
Hawaii.

The one song that often gets stuck in my head is...
"Philadelphia" by Bruce Springsteen.

On Sunday mornings, you can find me...
At church.

Pick one: shooting hoops with LeBron James or tossing a football with Johnny Manziel?
Shooting hoops with LeBron, of course!

Worst outdoor chore:
Cleaning the gutters.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

Presented by the National Rollercoaster Museum

COMPILED: Richard Munch



•**1907:** Thirty five acres of Brooklyn's **Coney Island** was laid waste after a major fire decimated **Steeplechase Park** on July 28. The fourth Coney Island fire in 10 years, the great park with its popular amusement zone took the brunt of the damage, although almost seven blocks of flimsy buildings and businesses also suffered major losses. The \$1.5 million dollar fire began in the Cave of the Winds, destroying the scenic railway, the Razzle Dazzle, the show buildings, the dance pavilion and several small hotels. For a time the flames threatened nearby **Luna Park** and **Dreamland**, and scores of smaller places which fringe the water's edge for a mile. Days later, **George C. Tilyou** would promise a "Grander Than Ever" restoration, which would come in the guise of a fireproof constructed indoor pavilion the following summer.

•**1916:** The *Los Angeles Times* reported on July 2 that construction of the **Great Looff Pier** in Santa Monica, California was being rushed to completion. It had already reached 500 feet seaward with the first buildings nearing completion. **Arthur Looff** had purchased land just south of the 1909 **Santa Monica Municipal Pier** and started construction of the first amusement pier on north beach, eventually reaching 900 feet into the ocean. In addition, construction of the new Blue Streak Racer roller coaster over the ocean began on June 12, under Looff's supervision. Looff informed the *Times* that workmen were laboring in shifts driving piles into the floor of the Pacific for the new pier as fast as was humanly possible.

•**1954:** **George A. Hamid**, director and past president of the **National Association of Amusement Parks Pools and Beaches** would write an article 'How Safe are our Amusement Parks' for the July 18 *Washington Post American Weekly*. He wrote that coast-to-coast, park safety was a problem that was worrying many parents. His article would go on to say: "One big question bothers many of the parents that I meet. They ask if the **Steel Pier** in Atlantic City, where we entertain about 2,000,000 customers each year, is safe for my children. I get the same question in my offices at **White City Park** in Worcester, Massachusetts, and at the **New Jersey State Fair**. They say, "Mr. Hamid, how safe is my kid in these amusement places?" He responded positively based on statistics comparing parks to other forms of entertainment. In 1965, *Newsweek* magazine would credit Hamid as one of America's great entrepreneurs in outdoor entertainment.

•**1962:** It is suggested that early roller coaster riding marathon-ing began as radio station promotions. Two radio disc jockeys took 283 consecutive roller coaster rides for charity at **Conneaut Lake Park**, near Meadville, Pennsylvania. On the morning of Saturday July 28, **Brian Emory** and **Dick Lepley** began riding the Blue Streak roller coaster. They rode for 14 hours and 15 minutes, collecting over \$900 for their charity. Unfortunately their attempt for a record in roller coaster rides could not match the 303 rides taken in a row by another disc jockey in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

1966: With Brooklyn, New York's **Steeplechase Park** sold by the **George Tilyou's** daughter Marie the year before, a development company proposed a 160-foot high **Pleasure Dome** for **Coney Island**. The multimillion-dollar scheme for the redevelopment of the amusement district with a climate controlled dome was announced in mid-July. The proposed facility would create a year-round recreational center, a convention hall, parking facilities, new shops and housing. Like most of the more elaborate developments in Coney Island, this project never got further than the newspaper announcement.

►SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 1

including five that are more than 30 feet wide. Also included is the world's first interactive fog screen complete with interactive targets. Guests shoot at the targets as they approach, then ride right through the screen. Reserve team members can fire their lasers up to 20 times per second, and each laser in the vehicle is a different color. When a target is hit, it takes only 5 milliseconds for the computer to generate an on-screen reaction. The final sequences have team members chasing the villains through a virtual loop then into a subway tunnel complete with moving train. In the end, the Justice League prevails, the henchman are captured and team members are thanked for their assistance before being returned to the loading platform.

Both rides replaced previous attractions at their respective parks. In the case of Six Flags Over Texas, the building had housed an Iwerks motion simulator that opened in 1995 as The Right Stuff: Mach 1 Ad-



venture that ran through the 1998 season. Renamed, Adventure Theater, various movies had been shown throughout the years, including some specific to holiday seasons such as Halloween and Christmas. The theater closed at the end of the 2010 season and remained idle. In order to accommodate the new Justice League ride, an addition was added to the back and side of the building, with portions extending over the retention pond that holds water for Roaring Rapids.

At Six Flags St. Louis, Justice League replaced an already popular Sally Corporation interactive dark ride, Scooby-Doo! Ghostbusters: The Mystery of the Scary Swamp. That attraction was the fourth incarnation of the original Arrow-float through ride, Injun Joe's Cave, which

opened with the park in 1971. Operating since 2002, the 12-year-old Scooby ride was due for a refurbishment or replacement, but parkgoers still voiced their disappointment with the decision to close the ride. It was also right in the middle of the park's DC comics section, making it the perfect location for a Justice League attraction. During the IAAPA expo, Park President Dave Roemer told *AT* he was public enemy number one in St. Louis. Hopefully the dazzling new Justice League will have thrill seekers becoming more accepting of the loss of the former Scooby Doo attraction.

Six Flags collaborated with the most innovative minds in the industry to bring this thrilling attraction to life. Sally Corporation, an industry leader in dark rides, designed the complete experience including story development, scenery and life-like animatronics that guests encounter throughout the ride. John Wood of Sally Corporation told *AT*, "We've been talking

► See **SIX FLAGS**, page 5

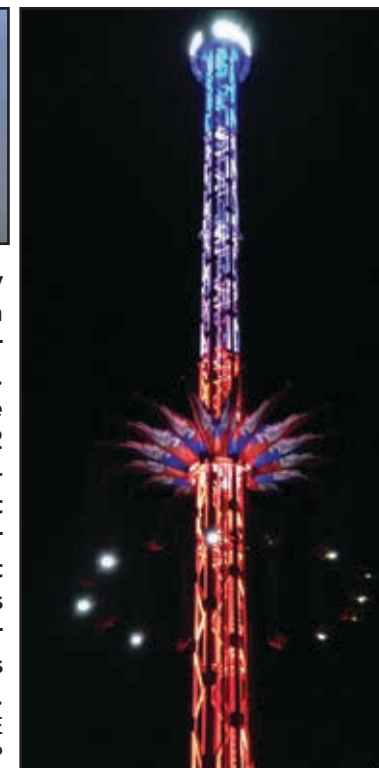
Six Flags Mexico debuts Funtime's ninth StarFlyer

MEXICO CITY — Six Flags Mexico recently became home to the ninth unit of Funtime's popular StarFlyer tower swing ride series when it opened earlier this spring. Sporting a bright red, silver and blue color scheme, the SkyScreamer is the newest thrill ride at Six Flags Mexico, adding yet another exciting beacon to the park's impressive skyline. And topping out at 242 feet, it is now the park's tallest attraction.

As the first StarFlyer that the Austrian company has built south of the border, SkyScreamer marks yet another successful project with Six Flags. Hannes Lackner, Funtime's lead engineer, said that working with the Six Flags team continues to be a good experience. "We brought in some of our team members and they worked with park staff and local contractors. The ride was up and running before their popular Easter season and has been a great hit with guests."

The 32-seat StarFlyer can be seen for miles, especially after sunset. Thirty three LED spotlights illuminate the tower so it can be seen at night while 32 flashing LEDs under the seats make the ride appears as a descending UFO. The SkyScreamer has been extremely popular with park-goers and provides Six Flags Mexico with a new marketing icon.

Maryland-based Ride Entertainment Group (REG) represents Funtime. "We continue to have a great working relationship with Six Flags and this park in particular," said Adam Sandy, REG's chief business development officer. "In 2013 we opened a 60-meter Slingshot at the park, and this year it was the StarFlyer. We can't wait to see what's next."



Six Flags Mexico recently became home to the ninth unit of Funtime's popular StarFlyer tower swing ride. Dubbed SkyScreamer, the new tower tops out at 242 feet making it the park's tallest attraction. The 32-seat SkyScreamer can be seen for miles, especially after sunset thanks to 33 LED spotlights that illuminate the tower along with 32 flashing LEDs under the seats. COURTESY RIDE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

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►SIX FLAGS

Continued from page 4

with Six Flags for a number of years about a new dark ride. They challenged us years ago to come up with something that would challenge their family market as well as the teenage market and I think we hit the ball out of the park."

At St. Louis, Sally was no stranger to the location of the project, having designed and built the Scooby Doo ride. The new ride system, however, no longer used the old Arrow float-through system, so the channels had to be filled in. Wood told *AT* the channel was filled with concrete, and they also had to replace the entire electrical system, as some of those systems went back 44 years.

Pure Imagination Studios, known for its computer generated imagery, created the 3D graphics and film. Alterface, renowned for its work in site-based interactive game play, headed up the interactive gaming elements.

Oceaneering Entertainment Systems designed the first-of-its-kind, fully programmable, multi-degree-of-

freedom vehicles that transport guests through all the exciting twists and turns. Oceaneering, founded in 1964, is famous for its robotics and deep-water exploration vehicles. The entertainment division made use of underwater robotics technology with the original *Jaws* attraction at Universal Studios Florida in 1990. When asked about the ride vehicles for this attraction, Bill Bunding, director of business development said, "This vehicle was developed specifically for this type of attraction. It was developed to help Sally's storytelling and to lay down the groundwork around which all the special effects can all work."

Following the media preview, Six Flags Over Texas gold season pass holders got an exclusive sneak peek of the new ride on May 21 and all season pass holders got advanced exclusive ride time on May 22. *Justice League: Battle for Metropolis* opened to all park guests on May 23. The St. Louis version had similar media and guest preview days, opening to all park guests on May 30.



Riders on *Justice League: Battle for Metropolis* use interactive laser blasters (shown here in both images) in an attempt to extinguish the 600 virtual and tangible targets featured throughout the attraction. The dark ride features sleek six-passenger vehicles with onboard computers providing instant scoring summaries. COURTESY SIX FLAGS





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INTERNATIONAL

► Madame Tussauds London debuts *Star Wars* exhibit — Page 8 / Kingdom Resort adds waterplay — Page 9

Red Arrows Skyforce swoops into Blackpool Pleasure Beach

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

BLACKPOOL, England — The Red Arrows were the stars of the show in May at Blackpool Pleasure Beach (BPB) alongside the latest thrill ride to open at the park, the Red Arrows Skyforce.

The new ride was officially launched in late May and the opening coincided with a display by the world famous Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows. Well-known for their amazing air displays, the pride of the Royal Air Force is now represented at BPB in a unique partnership in which riders take control of individual planes to spin, glide and take formation in their very own display.

Supplied by German ride manufacturer Gerstlauer (the attraction is one of the company's Sky Flyer rides) and fully branded in Red Arrows livery, Red Arrows Skyforce is situated in the shadow of the Big One roller coaster. It also features its own "control tower" where novice pilots will be prepared for take-off before stepping into their cockpit.

Standing 72 feet (22 meters) high, the 12-seat white

knuckle ride takes 'pilots' on a 360-degree tour of the skies in a spinning, swirling experience, much of which they control themselves through the use of a joystick in each hand. They experience in excess of 3G and after touching down at the end of the "flight" guests can visit a dedicated shop featuring exclusive merchandise and souvenirs designed for BPB.

The £2 million (\$3.5 million) attraction is unique in the U.K. and represents a unique partnership between the Red Arrows and BPB. Deputy Managing Director of the Pleasure Beach, Nick Thompson, said: "Skyforce is a unique ride and a first for the U.K. which we are certain will be a big hit for all our guests. The Red Arrows give their audiences a thrill across the globe and we are sure the new ride will give our guests a big thrill!"

The Red Arrows are ambassadors for the United Kingdom and showcase the excellence of the Royal Air Force. The team consists of nine display pilots and 110 support staff. Based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire and flying Hawk jets, 2014 was the team's 50th display season.



On Skyforce, Blackpool Pleasure Beach's new-for-2015 ride, a variety of actions - including formation flying - are possible, making it a true thrillseeker's must-do adventure. Below left, riders operate the action of their individual planes through the use of two joysticks at either side. The ride is a nicely themed version of the popular Gerstlauer Sky Flyer.

COURTESY BLACKPOOL PLEASURE BEACH





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INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

Dreamworld opens ABC Kids World

GOLD COAST, Australia – In a landmark collaboration with Australia's public broadcaster, **Dreamworld** opened in June 2015, **ABC Kids World**.

Growing on the successful 10-year partnership with *The Wiggles* since 2005, Dreamworld has extended the footprint of their world for children to incorporate several new television icons from **ABC Kids**.

Inspired by and designed in collaboration with the popular children's brand, ABC Kids World is every child's fantasy-come-reality where their characters will come to life in an interactive and colorful world of fun, rides and games. ABC Kids World is the only one of its kind in the world, complementing existing Wiggles World attractions with rides, playgrounds and characters from *Giggle and Hoot*, *Play School* and *Bananas in Pyjamas*.

Craig Davidson, CEO of Dreamworld said: "Dreamworld is an iconic trusted brand within the Australian community, as is the ABC Kids brand. We offer a great opportunity in this new partnership globally through our strong presence internationally both as children's content and a major tourist destination, the perfect partnership.

"With ABC Kids World we are offering even more worlds for families, extending on our success with Wiggles World as well as Dreamworld's existing attractions of **DreamWorks Experience**, legendary family and thrill rides, animals, and water slides."

Robert Patterson, director, **ABC Commercial** said "We are delighted to partner with Australia's Dreamworld, to be able to bring the ABC Kids brand to life and extend the experience to the audience. Our ABC Kids is a much loved brand for almost 30 years and has entertained generations across the country."

First Shanghai Disney Resort tenants announced

SHANGHAI, China — While construction continues on **Shanghai Disney Resort**, the resort recently announced the names of the first tenants for its shopping, dining and entertainment district, **Disneytown**. The tenants include well-known and trusted local and international brands including renowned restaurants **Shanghai Min**, **Crystal Jade**, and **The Cheesecake Factory** operated by **Hong Kong Maxim's Group**, as well as various retail options including stores under **I.T. Group**, **Bape Store**, and a **Lego** brand retail store. Other exciting high-profile brands including **Food Republic**, **Coconut Paradise**, **The Dining Room**, **Hatsune**, **Blue Frog**, **Xin Wang Restaurant**, **Bread-Talk**, **Toast Box**, and **Chow Tai Fook** will also be the first of several dozen tenants that will work closely with Shanghai Disney Resort to offer world-class shopping and dining options.

Shanghai Disney Resort's Disneytown will initially be comprised of a 46,000 square meter pedestrian-access area and will be located next door to **Shanghai Disneyland**, and within walking distance from both **Shanghai Disneyland Hotel** and **Toy Story Hotel**. When the resort celebrates its grand opening in spring of 2016, Disneytown will feature nearly 50 tenants.

360 Play FEC announced for Basildon, U.K.

BASILDON, U.K. — Following the success of its three existing venues in Milton Keynes, Stevenage and Leicester in the U.K., **DP Leisure** (DPL), operator of the 360 Play children's entertainment center brand, has announced that it is to open a fourth U.K. site later this year, in Basildon, Essex.

Now firmly established as a leading brand name within the U.K.'s children's entertainment center sector, the newest 360 Play site will be located at Basildon's **Festival Leisure Park**, located just a short distance from Basildon town center. The mixed use site is currently home to a wide variety of other leisure businesses, including **Empire Cinema**, **Hollywood Bowl**, **Fitness First**, **Festival Wakeboard Park** and a host of restaurants, and the 360 Play center will add further diversity to the mix.

"We are thrilled to announce the planned opening of our fourth 360 Play centre in the U.K.," said Managing Director **Duncan Phillips**, "and are delighted to have secured a site on what is a very popular leisure destination in Basildon with a significant catchment area."



Visitors at Madame Tussauds London's new *Star Wars* experience can recreate the famous 'I am your father' scene with Darth Vader. COURTESY MADAM TUSSAUDS LONDON

Madame Tussauds London debuts new *Star Wars* exhibit

AT: Andrew Mellor
amellor@amusementtoday.com

LONDON, England — Madame Tussauds London has opened a major new attraction in the shape of a new *Star Wars* experience.

Fans of the iconic films can now get up close and personal with all their favorite characters in 11 atmospheric scenes covering a galaxy of locations such as the swamps of Dagobah, Jabba the Hutt's Throne Room and the flight deck of the Millennium Falcon, and featuring a cast of legendary characters recreated as life-like wax figures.

Officially opened in May, the new experience represents a significant expansion of the world-famous attraction and has been created in close collaboration with Disney and Lucas Film. The attention to detail synonymous with all the wax figures produced by Madame Tussauds over the years continues to astound and amaze in the venue's latest exhibit with fans hugely impressed by what has been created.

"We are delighted, and I have to confess relieved, by fans' reactions today," said Madame Tussauds London's general manager Ben Sweet at the opening. "The *Star Wars* films are so loved, and fans so passionate, it was a huge responsibility to get this right. It has taken over 180 sculptors, hair art-

ists, colorists, set designers and prop makers more than a year to create the experience — everyone wanted to make it as authentic as possible.

"We were given rare access to the *Star Wars* archives at Skywalker Ranch in California, which was invaluable, and the artistic team poured over stills and footage day and night to ensure the likenesses of our wax stars are spot on and the sets as reminiscent of the actual film scenes as possible. We hope people will become immersed in the *Star Wars* story and interact with their

favorite characters in a totally new and exciting way."

A variety of scenes have been recreated, among them the famous moment when Darth Vader reveals he is Luke Skywalker's father. The figures alone cost approximately £2.5 million (U.S. \$3.8 million) to create.

Entry to *Star Wars* at Madame Tussauds London is included in the admission price. A similar but smaller scale experience has also opened at Madame Tussauds Berlin, featuring some of the same *Star Wars* characters, but in different specially recreated scenes.



Above, the flight deck of the Millennium Falcon with Chewbacca is one of the many *Star Wars* scenes recreated at Madame Tussauds London. Right, the Tatooine landscape with C-3PO and R2-D2 are recreated for guest photo opportunities. COURTESY MADAM TUSSAUDS LONDON



Arihant installs water play system at Kingdom Resort

PILANESBERG, South Africa — Arihant Industrial Corporation Ltd., India's largest manufacturer and supplier of waterpark equipment, has installed a new water based attraction at the Kingdom Resort in South Africa.

Situated next to the Pilianesberg National Park, close to some of the most spectacular landscapes in South Africa, and a short distance from the internationally renowned Sun City complex, Kingdom Resort provides a range of accommodations from hotel style suites to four bedroom luxury self-catering villas, in addition to a host of entertainment facilities such as a children's play area, adventure golf, hot air balloon rides, a spa, mountain biking and numerous sporting activities. Among the most recently added facilities is the new Splash Kingdom waterpark which was officially opened last December and features, among other attractions, a six platform water activity play system designed, supplied and installed by Arihant.

Incorporating a jungle

theme, the play system features multiple slides in different colors, all originating from different levels to provide thrills for both adults and children. All are manufactured using the latest RTM technology.

The attraction also offers numerous sprinklers, rain showers, water jets and a huge elephant head tilting bucket to soak participants which is proving particularly popular with younger visitors. A combination of attractive, multi-colored structures and slides, the animal characters and overall theming provide a jungle-like atmosphere to the attraction which has proved a hit with guests from the outset and has attracted visitors from various locations around the resort, the response from whom has been very positive according to Arihant.

The company has delivered more than 375 projects across the globe during the past 33 years and currently has developments installed in 46 countries.

—Andrew Mellor



Among Arihant's latest installations is a six platform water activity play system at the Kingdom Resort in South Africa. The new water activity attraction caters to all ages.

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WATER PARKS & RESORTS

► Universal Orlando Resort adding another gate in 2017, Volcano Bay water park — Page 17

Aquatopia indoor water park, hotel arrive at Camelback Resort

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

TANNERSVILLE, Pa. — “Life is either a great adventure or nothing at all.” Helen Keller once said those words and Camelback Resort is proof that a tremendous new adventure just got underway May 1. That is when the new 453 suite Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark opened to the public.

This is the biggest indoor waterpark in the Northeast, at 125,000 square feet. The adjoining eight story, \$163 million water park hotel is the largest one ever built in a single phase. The complex sits in the lush mountainside, in the heart of the Poconos, complementing the rest of the Camelback Resort — a resort that has entertained many of the 22 million leisure travelers who annually flock to northeast Pennsylvania.

“With the opening of Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark, we now offer more year-round adventure in one mountain location than anywhere else in the country,” said Arthur Berry III, co-owner of the resort.

Theming is central to the entire Aquatopia/Camelback Lodge experience. Kartrite Van Der Berris, a fictitious, yet legendary world explorer brings his global journeys to life in both the hotel and water park. Actually the name plays homage to resort co-owners Arthur Berry and Ken Ellis. Ellis likens the character to a young Indiana Jones and “the most interesting man in the world.” “We wanted more sophistication in the theme, real — not whimsical.” When asked about how the name Aquatopia was chosen, Ellis

replied, “About a year ago in a marketing/branding meeting we were discussing what to name what we feel is the world’s finest indoor water park and based on the Kartrite world adventure theme, we thought Aquatopia would fit. It encompasses everything that an indoor water park could be...kind of like utopia but Aquatopia.”

This multi-story ultimate indoor water park features 13 slides and seven pools, with a few first time attractions. Here’s a brief run-down:

•**Bombora FlowRider** — guests ride the waves in this Australian surf themed Boogie Board experience.

•**The Great Ka-Na-Ga-Wa Wavepool** — features an icy arctic expedition motif.

•**Venus Slyde Trap** — this first of its kind, 600 foot long, enclosed family rafting tube features three water experiences in one: family raft, sphere and Manta wall.

•**Storm Chaser** — this uphill Master Blaster water coaster tube slide can accommodate one or two riders. At 756 feet long it is North America’s longest indoor uphill water coaster.

•**The Himalayan** — this head first mat slide racer features multiple high speed drops.

•**Outa Space Race** — a high speed (feet first) aqua tube body slide.

•**Mountain Mayhem** — a serpentine giant aqua tube two-person slide with splash-down landing pool.

•**Constrictor** — this two-person tube slide is a first of its kind in the Northeastern United States.

•**Paradise Plunge** — this high-speed, free fall body slide

features the popular AquaLaunch start capsule.

•**Skydive Plummet** — High G looping, flattened figure eight water slide also with AquaLaunch start capsule.

•**Kartrite’s Quest** — this multi-level AquaPlay/educational station features five deck zones of activity and six interactive water slide tracks. Another first only at Aquatopia.

•**Penguin Play Bay** — Antarctic themed children’s shallow pool area with sprays, geysers and sprinklers.

•**The Lost River** — This 500-foot long quick current underground river experience is enhanced with lighting, sounds and water effects ending beside a 60 foot waterfall.

•**Ally-Oop Lagoon** — a general swim area with water basketball.

•**Croc-O-Nile Crossing** — allows kids to walk on the heads of crocodiles while trying to balance and cross the pools using an overhead cargo net.

•**Mystic Springs** — an indoor/outdoor family warm-water spa with hydrotherapy jets.

Other amenities in the water park include cabana rentals, various food and drink concessions, including one swim up version (Flyboy’s Lagoon), along with retail opportunities.

The entire water park complex was planned, engineered and built by Aquatic Development Group (ADG) Cohoes, New York. ADG’s creative design team worked with The Weber Group and WhiteWater West, builders and suppliers in the waterpark industry. Couple this with the theming and interesting story



Aquatopia's unique theming (above) welcomes guests upon entering under the 1.5-acre Texlon transparent roof (right), where a bevy of slides (below) and attractions await. COURTESY AQUATOPIA



line of Kartrite’s Expeditions, created by ADG and you have the makings of a very credible water park experience.


The water park sits underneath a 1.5-acre Texlon transparent roof also supplied by ADG — the largest install overall in any water park in North America. The roof’s

unique design offers a great deal of natural light — whether day or night. It is sound transparent making for quieter space. Also 75 percent of the ultra violet rays pass through allowing healthy plant growth and tan capabilities as well. Depending on the time of

► See AQUATOPIA, page 14

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►AQUATOPIA

Continued from page 11

day the area takes on a different feel — day or night — thanks to the special features of the Texlon roof materials. The temperature throughout Aquatopia is set to 84 degrees year round.

Aquatopia offers some of the most unique play experiences ever developed, including Kartrite's Continent Quest, a next-generation interactive play structure created by WhiteWater West, offering an unparalleled number of activities with five ride experiences from the toddler-friendly Kid-Lantis to the dizzying heights of the Out-N-Back Trek and Silk Road Runner body slides. Also by WhiteWater is America's longest indoor uphill

water coaster, the Storm Chaser, that propels riders up and down twists and turns akin to a cyclone; and the signature Venus SlydeTrap, a thrilling 6-person raft ride that thrusts teams of "expedition members" through light shows, twists and turns, culminating in a zero gravity plunge.

Indoor water parks can be very tricky, according to Clay Chamberlin, senior attractions install advisor with WhiteWater West (Richmond, British Columbia, Canada) who oversaw the slide installation portion of the project. "Building an indoor park is always a challenge due to the limited space. This install was no different as many of the other trades were trying to get their work done in this tight space," said Chamberlin. "To

help keep the area looking neat, clean and efficient, towers were constructed with extensive staircases that lead to various slides.

"The effort put into the development of Aquatopia from both WhiteWater and ADG was extremely collaborative," says Geoff Chutter, President and CEO of WhiteWater West. "As we brought innovative and exciting products to the table, ADG introduced theming and narrative to further elevate the play experience. Every step of the way, ADG challenged us to take our products to the next level with unique colors and theming, adding to the many layers of an intricate story that will blow guests away. Aquatopia truly redefines the indoor water park experience and we are proud to be a part of it."

The dream has been in the works since 2005 when Barry and Ellis bought the resort from the previous owner. The two go way back. They were roommates at Skidmore College, Saratoga, New York in the early 1980s. They always thought that having attractions that could operate throughout the year would add to the overall appeal of the property. As Ken Ellis co-owner and also CEO of ADG (Aquatic Development Group) said, "Being on both sides of the business I wanted to create something truly unique and special."

Permits for the water park and hotel were actually secured in 2008, however with the economy, the "timing was not right," said Ellis. The next five years were spent on tweaking the design.

Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark employs 200 part-time and 400 full-time staff along with 80 management people to insure a seamless operation.

Also part of the complex is the Arcadia Family Indoor Adventure Center. This two level 45,000 square foot facility, offers more than 100 video, interactive and ticket redemption games, ropes courses and rock climbing for kids and adults, mini-golf, black light laser tag, bowling and even an arts and crafts center. The property also features a true ski-in/ski-out access to trails and taverns.

"I'm pleased with the size of the water park," said Ellis. He continued, "We oversized it to the number of rooms we



This developer's rendering shows Aquatopia's clever use of space in its master design. COURTESY AQUATOPIA

have." The extra 40,000 square feet of space was created for two reasons. Camelback Resort strives to offer a guest experience second to none. Also, other Camelbeach Resort guests can buy a ticket to enjoy all that Aquatopia has to offer.

The management of the Camelback Lodge and Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark is a partnership between Stand Rock Hospitality and Camelback Resort. Stand Rock Hospitality is comprised of four partners with a long history in the indoor and outdoor water park industry. They include Pete Helland Jr., Pat Helland, Tim Lucke and Tim Gantz, all from the Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin area, the "Waterpark Capital of the World." Gantz was former owner of Noah's Ark water park. Stand Rock Hospitality also operates the Wilderness Lodge, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. along with other projects to its credit. The hotel side of the complex features 16 different style suites, three sit-down restaurants and 20,000 feet of meeting, entertainment and conference space.

With three major players in the Poconos (Great Wolf Lodge, Kalahari and Aquatopia), how does Aquatopia stand out from the competition? AT asked Ellis that question, "Quite honestly, it's the entire Camelback Resort that stands out. Camelback Lodge and Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark is situated at the base of Camelback Ski Area, a true ski in/ski out facility. There's an existing 20-acre outdoor waterpark, Camelbeach, as well as CBK Mountain Adventures adventure park along with 40 lanes of snow tubing, which is the largest snow tubing park in the U.S. There are 900,000 folks already coming to the Camelback Resort so we feel our location and our statement: "Countless Adventures, One Resort" truly is the differ-

entiation between our property and the other two."

Ellis continued, "As far as Aquatopia itself, it's not just the size of the water park, but the attention to detail in the design that ADG created that really brings the theme to the forefront. The attractions are second to none and when you're inside the facility, you don't know if you're indoors or out. The whole experience from the rides to enjoying the natural lighting to the authentic theming, really sets Aquatopia above the rest."

Co-owner, Arthur Berry III also had this to say, "Camelback Resort has been a place for friends and family to gather, near and far, for 50 years." Berry continued, "Countless adults and children have learned to ski here and even more have experienced the thrill at Camelbeach Waterpark during the summer season. With the addition of Camelback Lodge and the new Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark, the best is yet to come."

The completion of the hotel and water park positions Camelback as a year round venue for all types of adventures — both indoor and out. Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark facility is stunning and breathtaking in its grandeur. Even those words fall short to describe this magnificent place that has been created in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Finally some words from the mythical host, Kartrite Van Der Berris, as seen in the hotel lobby, "I (Sir) Kartrite welcome you to a place of wonder, a place of history and of endless opportunities for adventure, relaxation and dining. A magnificent gem of a land where we can ski, sled, slide, splash, float, surf, tube, board, coast, climb, zip and soar while building life long memories together."

FAST FACTS

Name/Location

Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark/
Tannersville, Pa.

Project Cost/Opening

\$163 million/ May 1, 2015

Complex:

Hotel: 453 suites with 13 different room options, three restaurants and numerous other amenities

Water Park: 13 water slides and seven pools in a 125,000-square-foot area underneath a 1.5 acre Texlon transparent roof

Other: 45,000-square-foot, two-level Arcadia Family Indoor Adventure Center, offering over 100 video, interactive and ticket redemption games, ropes courses and rock climbing for kids and adults, mini-golf, black light laser tag, bowling and more

Ownership/Management Company

Co-Owners: Arthur Berry III and Aquatic Development Group CEO Ken Ellis, and Stand Rock Hospitality partners Pete Helland Jr., Pat Helland, Tim Lucke and Tim Gantz

Management: Stand Rock Hospitality

Key Suppliers

Design: Aquatic Development Group (ADG)

Architect: Architectural Design Consultants (ADCI)

Construction: Hotel/Horizon Construction;

Water Park: Aquatic Development Group (ADG)

Theme Design and Build: Weber Group Inc

Waterslides/Play Structure: WhiteWater West Industries

Wave Pool/Wave Generator/Flow Rider/Filtration

Equipment: Aquatic Development Group (ADG)

Rafts/Tubes/Mats: Zebec, Inc.

Family Entertainment Center (FEC) Equipment:

Family Entertainment Group; Ropes Course Intl.

Children's Equipment: Weber Group Inc.;

Vortex International; Playtime; Bomar

Furniture: Telescope Casual Furniture

Lockers: Best Locker

Pool and/or Deck Coatings: Concrete Coverings

Pumps: Grundfos CBS (Paco Pumps)

Chemical: Sure Water Technologies; Stenner

Chemical Controllers: Chemtrol

Transparent Roof System: Aquatic Dev. Group (ADG)

Food/Equipment: Landmark

Safety Consultants: Jeff Ellis & Associates

Uniforms: TrueVision



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Quassy to expand water park; other improvements announced

MIDDLEBURY, Conn. — Quassy Amusement & Waterpark will more than double the number of waterslides at Splash Away Bay over the next several seasons, park officials announced on June 20. In addition, the park revealed other improvements to take place in the coming years.

The lakeside water park adjacent to Quassy Beach will introduce eight new slides, including what will be titled Slide City for younger children, as well as three giant slides with a combined length of more than 1,000 feet.

"We're excited about further expanding the water park as it has become a venerable part of the guest experience here at Quassy," Park President Eric Anderson said of the project.

Also, Quassy will be building a new candy shop, beach snack building and replacing some rides within the amusement area of the facility. An estimated \$6 million will be reinvested into the historic lakeside park over the next five years.

The new slides will be provided by ProSlide Technology, Inc., of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. ProSlide was the vendor for the existing seven slides at the attraction, which was first introduced in 2003 as Saturation Station.

Slide City For 2016

The first phase of the expansion is targeted for opening in 2016. The Slide City project will consist of five slides adjacent to the Saturation Station interactive modular water play structure. Two serpentine slides called Kids Twisters, a two-person ProRacer, Kidz Bowl 14 and a KIDZ MiniRiver will make up the Slide City area. Four of the slides will end in shallow troughs while the bowl unit will gently send riders along the wall of a circular-shaped landing prior to exiting.

Big Slides, Huge Thrills

The larger slides, projected for opening in 2017, will be located in an area now occupied by picnic tables on the north side of the property.

The largest of the three giant slides will be a TantrumTwist. The patented funnel shape flushes riders up the Tantrum walls, oscillates each tube multiple times and generates the suspended-weightlessness sensation that is unique to ProSlide funnel rides.

After dropping into the funnel, riders are swept up the wall to the equator line, which is actually perpendicular to the ground. The ride creates the illusion of going over the edge keeping even the craziest thrill enthusiasts returning for more. Two gigantic Pipeline serpentine slides will round out the three-ride attraction. The new slides will all depart from one platform and conclude in runoff troughs near Saturation Station.

Other improvements

The existing popcorn concession near the Grand Carousel will be razed to make way for a new candy shop featuring a taffy manufacturing operation from yesteryear.

"We have purchased a taffy puller (machine) and wrapping machine that will not only provide great candy, but are also entertaining to watch," said George Frantzis II, a park owner. "The wrapping machine dates back to around 1915 and has been completely restored by an industry expert."

Guests at Quassy Beach and the water park will be able to purchase food and beverages at Splash Away Bay Café, a new lakefront structure slated to be built within the next year or two. In addition to providing food service within the water park area, the café will feature rooftop seating on a deck overlooking Lake Quassapaug.

Quassy's Safety Department will also have a second maintenance building as part of the park's upgrades.

"With the addition of numerous new rides and attractions over the past several years it became apparent that our maintenance staff needed more room to accomplish its work, especially in the off-season when much of the equipment is indoors," Anderson said of the planned structure.

"We are also looking at replacing some of our older rides within the amusement area of the park," he added.



NEWS SPLASH

COMPILED: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Resorts in the leisure industry are becoming increasingly savvy about the advantages of adding water park elements to their facilities. Even those sitting beach side realize that families, in particular, prefer spending time in the sun playing on aquatic offerings that have been specifically designed to create a safe and entertaining environment. The **Hotel Globales Playa Estepona** in Malaga, Spain, recently opened a 215,000 square-foot **Splash World Waterpark** designed by **Polin Waterparks** of Turkey. Splash World celebrated its grand opening in May 2015. A multi-slide complex, Kamikaze, Black Hole, two Space Holes and an Aquatube were installed to appeal to thrill seekers. Many of the slides feature Polin's Natural Light Effects (NLE) technology to create glowing, colorful designs within the slide using natural sunlight. Younger guests will appreciate the Octopus Slide, Mini Pirate Slide, Rabbit Slide and Mushroom. Older kids can have a blast on a B6 water play structure featuring multiple water-play elements including a tipping bucket, net climbs and water cannons.

Guests not wanting to slide can enjoy the other water offerings including a huge wave pool, as well as a giant L-shaped pool with a bar and a more relaxed pool located in the hotel's gardens.

Stratos Diamantopoulos, the resort owner, says, "We are the highest quality resort in Spain, but we want to continually be improving and always offering our guests the most relaxing, fun experience for their holiday travels. The water park attractions at Splash World do exactly that. And guests have already told us that the new slides have truly made their visits memorable."

WhiteWater West collaborated closely with **The Looping Group** to deliver the first fusion waterslide to Switzerland. Houla Hoop combines WhiteWater's Constrictor and Rattler slides into one unique attraction.

The project posed a unique design and installation challenge of fitting a large amount of new fiberglass into a tangle of waterslide flumes. Squeezed tightly among the existing waterslides, the massive and brightly colored Houla Hoop water slide had to be carefully positioned by WhiteWater's skilled slidepath designers. The team developed a detailed 3D layout of the site and existing slides in order to design the layout and support structure for the new attraction.

The Looping Group owns and manages eight leisure parks throughout Europe in France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

In May, **Six Flags White Water**, Marietta, Georgia, debuted the tallest slide ever designed for the park with the opening of Dive Bomber. The new 10-story attraction, from **ProSlide**, stands above everything else in the park and features ProSlide's SkyBox capsule/trap door rider release system. Once the trap door opens, guests will drop into a nearly 90 degree tube and reach speeds of more than

40 miles per hour. Dive Bomber is a remodel of the park's former cliffhanger speed slide.

New this season, Splash Works, the water park within **Canada's Wonderland** in Vaughan, will be home to a **ProSlide** Typhoon, their thrilling new water slide featuring oscillating funnels and hairpin turns. The water park also introduced Splash Station, a wet and wild interactive children's play area.

For guest comfort, all-new VIP Cabanas were introduced for the exclusive poolside seat next to White Water Bay. The Splash Works experience will be transformed with 10-foot by 10 foot private cabanas, accommodating up to six guests. Each cabana includes patio table set with four chairs; two chaise lounge chairs, a 32 inch flat screen TV with satellite service, a Cabana Welcome Package – including towels, sunscreen, and other sundries; a mini-fridge stocked with bottled water and Food and Beverage Wait Service that lets cabana guests purchase food & beverages to be delivered to their cabana.

A surfing water park could be in the works for Austin, Texas. Little is known about **NLand Surf Park**, the company behind the project, and specific details are sketchy, but **Doug Coors**, a descendent of the founder of **Coors Brewing Company**, is listed as the founder and CEO. Although the location has not been disclosed, permits have been filed for a 160-acre waterpark near Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. NLand says it will make use of technology from **Wavegarden** of Spain to produce surfable waves for its park. Wavegarden's website and Facebook page corroborate NLand's claim by stating that Austin, Texas, will be the location of the first wave park in the United States. Wavegarden is currently finishing up its first public wave park at **Surf Snowdonia** in Wales — expected to open in August. A private demonstration park in Northern Spain is not open to the public.

Ravine Waterpark in Paso Robles, California, unveiled in May a 140-foot mural painted by local children on a fence along the edge of the park. The art piece, created by students with the Paso Robles Youth Arts Foundation, depicts sea life and summer fun.

The Paso Robles Youth Arts Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded in 2001 to enrich the lives of area youth with free classes in the visual and performing arts in a safe nurturing environment.

WhiteWater West has landed one of the largest water park contracts in the industry. Ground was broken May 20, 2015, on China's **Yinji Xinmi Waterpark** in Henan. WhiteWater was chosen to provide installation, engineering and design services, and will be the sole supplier of equipment. The contract is valued at \$34 million. Scheduled to be completed in 2016, the park will feature a multitude of water slides along with one of WhiteWater's newest attractions — a No Boundaries attraction with an adventure trail, ropes course and zip lines.



Volcano Bay at Universal Orlando Resort will open in 2017.
COURTESY UNIVERSAL

Volcano Bay announced for Universal Orlando

ORLANDO, Fla. —Universal Orlando Resort recently announced that it plans to bring to life an entirely new water theme park experience. Dubbed Volcano Bay at Universal Orlando Resort, it will join Universal Studios Florida and Universal's Islands of Adventure and become the resort's third immersive park.

Universal's Volcano Bay will be a place for the entire family. It will be a whole new generation of experience that reimagines what it means to be a water park.

According to Universal's press material,

the company wants to imagine a place that offers radically innovative, thrilling attractions, peaceful moments of relaxation and an inspired guest experience that will forever change the perception of water parks. It will be set in a highly themed, completely immersive environment inspired by postcard-perfect tropical islands.

Universal's Volcano Bay will be located within Universal Orlando Resort, just south of the Cabana Bay Beach Resort. Work is already underway and more details will be released in the future.

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PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS

► Hersheypark's enclosed Maurer Laff Trakk coaster debuts — Page 25 / Fairs & Attractions — Pages 34-38

Kings Island, Dorney Park add Flying Scooters, more

Kings Island, located in Mason, Ohio, opened for its 44th season on Saturday, April 18 with a pair of new family rides, Woodstock Gliders and Snoopy's Space Buggies.

Located within Kings Island's 14-time Golden Ticket Award-winning Planet Snoopy kids' area, Woodstock Gliders is a classic Flying Scooter ride supplied by Larson International. Utilizing eight two-person gondolas suspended by cables from central sweeps, riders use a movable front rudder to control the flight and alter their experience from mild to wild. Experienced pilots can reach heights of nearly three stories above the midway. Woodstock Gliders brings the Flying Scooter experience back to Kings Island after an 11-year absence. The park's original version – a classic Bisch-Rocco model that migrated from

Ohio's Coney Island to Kings Island in 1972 – was relocated to sister park Carowinds in 2005.

Snoopy's Space Buggies, from Zamperla, is an attraction designed for children to enjoy with their parents or grandparents. Six four-seat vehicles bounce up and down while rotating in a circle. The new ride is located next door to Woodstock Gliders inside Planet Snoopy.

Along with the two new rides, Kings Island is also offering a number of other additions and upgrades to International Street including the largest Starbucks in the Tri-State region at 3,650 square feet.

Sixty new family members joined the park with the opening of one of the region's largest petting farms, Snoopy's Barnyard Friends, opened May 21, just before the Memorial Day weekend.



Kings Island recently kicked off its 44th season with a pair of new family rides, the Woodstock Gliders, a Larson International Flying Scooter, (above) and Snoopy's Space Buggies, a Zamperla Jump Around (above right). Also new at the Ohio park this summer is Snoopy's Barnyard Friends petting zoo, shown at right.

WOODSTOCK GLIDERS/AT, JOHN ROBINSON; OTHERS COURTESY KINGS ISLAND



Park visitors will have a chance to meet these gentle, socialized animals and attend a short educational show, performed four times a day, learning about alpacas, miniature horses, pygmy goats, domestic turkeys, call ducks, pot belly pigs and other treasured farm animals.

In Allentown, Pa., sister park Dorney Park and Wild-Water Kingdom opened its 132nd season with the Cedar Creek Flyers, a Flying Scooter ride also from Larson International. Located in the lower

section of the park across from Stinger (Vekoma Invertigo), this fun-filled experience is an updated version of a classic thrill ride. As with other Flying Scooters added to Cedar Fair parks, Cedar Creek Flyers utilizes eight, two-person gondolas suspended from a central sweep. Riders control the action by utilizing a front rudder to catch the wind.

Also new for 2015 is the addition of Smokehouse Barbecue to the current Patio Pizza location. The new restaurant will feature BBQ fa-

vorites such as smoked beef brisket and pulled pork.

An all season dining plan has been introduced for season passholders. This program will allow guests to redeem lunch and dinner each time they visit Dorney Park during the 2015 season. Each meal option will include an entrée and side at participating locations throughout the park including Amore Pizza, Coasters, Burger Barn and the new Smokehouse Barbecue.

—Scott Rutherford and Jeffrey Seifert



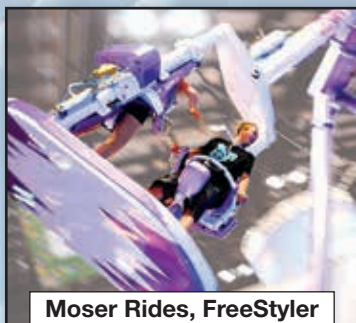
Dorney Park added this Larson International Flying Scooter to its ride lineup this season. Themed as Cedar Creek Flyers, the ride is placed near the Stinger roller coaster and adjacent to the stream that winds its way through the center of the park. A new Smokehouse Barbecue restaurant was added to the park's food/dining mix. AT/GARY SLADE

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WhiteWater Attractions delivers log flume to Calaway Park

Ride is first for company following acquisition of Hopkins Rides

CALGARY, Alberta, Canada — WhiteWater Attractions recently announced the opening of its first log flume since acquiring Hopkins Rides in August 2012.

Calaway Park's Timber Falls, located in Calgary, Alberta, takes riders on a journey through three interactive themed buildings as they queue up to ride the Timber Falls Sawmill. Riders will feel the rush of two high velocity drops (23 and 45 feet) and a zig-zag river section as they traverse the highly themed 1,437-foot long adventure. Non-riders can join in the action from the Timber Falls viewing area where spectators have access to two explosive water cannons. Guests also have the opportunity to take their memories home with a photo from the Timber Falls photo booth.

Calaway Park General Manager said, "We are excited to bring Timber Falls to our guests. Being our first

FAST FACTS

Name/Park
Timber Falls/
Calaway Park,
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Height/Length/Drops
45 feet/1,437 feet/
23 feet and 45 feet

Ride Time/Boats/Capacity
4:30/15/800 pph

Opened
May 23, 2015

Supplier
WhiteWater Attractions
Richmond, B.C., Canada

themed ride, not only does it thrill our guests with high velocity drops, it interacts with them in the entertaining, fast moving queue line. Timber Falls is a game changer; it aligns with the overall growth plan for the park."

Manufactured by WhiteWater Attractions with general construction by Canada's Kostam Design Inc., the

new log flume will improve the park's water consumption by retaining 95 percent of the water used to operate the ride.

Ever since the award-winning park opened its doors in 1982, Calaway Park has built a well-deserved reputation for excellence by offering the best attractions and strives to offer affordable, environmentally consciences and family-fun entertainment for over three decades.

WhiteWater Attractions opened its first log flume product since its acquisition of Hopkins rides in 2012. The 45 foot tall ride opened on May 23 at Calaway Park, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Featuring a length of 1,437 feet, Timber Falls utilizes 15 boats and is expected to deliver a capacity of 800 pph.
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Rocky Mountain makeovers continue at Six Flags

A Wicked Cyclone storms Twisted Colossus changes California coaster landmark's profile, dynamic

AT: B. Derek Shaw
bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

AGAWAM, Mass. — When the Cyclone opened at Riverside Park in Agawam, Massachusetts in 1983 it was one of the most talked about rides that year. Guests came from all over to experience this massive, yet compact, wooden twister coaster. A legend was born.

On May 20 during media day at what is now Six Flags New England, a new legend has been created — the transformation of the ride by Rocky Mountain Construction, Hayden, Idaho (RMC) into a formidable ride for 2015 and beyond. The Wicked Cyclone is the fifth hybrid creation for the company and the first one on the East Coast. (Twisted Colossus opened the same day at Six Flags Magic Mountain, Valencia, Calif.)

Nearly 300 media and enthusiasts were in attendance to get their first rides on the next generation wood/steel roller coaster. Reed Timmer from Discovery Channel's *Storm Chasers* made

a few remarks along with Steve Weigel, COO of Friendly's Restaurant, the corporate sponsor of Wicked Cyclone for 2015. Also speaking was Kim Gulette, executive director of the America Red Cross of Western Massachusetts, another partner with the park.

John Winkler, park president, also addressed those gathered, "This was a 10-month long process. Even those cold days... when we were all huddled up near the fire in our homes, these guys were attached to the structure, making this beautiful day happen for us, and very unselfishly. I want to thank everyone who had a hand in that tremendous effort and tremendous work by a lot of people." Winkler went on to say, "It is another amazing feat of engineering. This hybrid technology allows the flexibility of a wooden coaster with the rigidity of a steel frame. It allows you to do amazing things. There are so many elements on this ride that have never been created in

► See **CYCLONE**, page 24



Wicked Cyclone includes 14 airtime opportunities, including this double down drop (above) along with three different inversions (below) all packed into a fairly tight foot print.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS NEW ENGLAND



AT: Dean Lamanna
dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

VALENCIA, Calif. — Following nine furiously paced months of modification, rebuilding and testing, during which public interest reached a near-fever pitch, Six Flags Magic Mountain (SFMM) introduced its latest record-breaking roller coaster, Twisted Colossus, on May 23.

The 1978-built wooden racing coaster formerly known as Colossus — freshly repainted and looking more regal than ever on the edge of the park's expansive parking lot — has been given an elaborate steel retrofitting by Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) with its patented I-Box Track. The Hayden, Idaho-based company also extensively reprofiled and rebuilt the ride and linked its two separate tracks into one nearly 5,000-foot-long course.

The latter engineering feat, an achievement that manages to retain the original coaster's racing sensation while boosting the overall experience to a generous level of thrill-seeking satiation, is giving SFMM a new bragging right: world's longest hybrid roller coaster.

"They say everything old becomes new again," said Bonnie Rabjohn, park president, describing Twisted Colossus as "the most anticipated new ride of the year" during the media preview on May 20. "We've transformed our icon, Colossus... retrofitting it with amazing steel track to bring it into the next generation for many thrillseekers to enjoy."

After attendees took a spin on Twisted Colossus, it appeared that most agreed.

Sporting a new retro-industrial, steampunk-inspired logo and complimentary loading station décor touches that tie it to the rethemed park area now known as the Screampunk District, the coaster has comfortable new trains supplied by RMC outfitted with seatbelts and lap bars — a nice surprise for Southern Californians accustomed to shoulder restraints on rides with inversions.

So what's it like to be on the day's first train out?

Twisted Colossus gets off to a cheeky start along the otherwise leisurely run to its first lift, demonstrating the groundbreaking versatility of RMC's track with a series of short hops and



The original Colossus, designed and built by International Amusement Devices and Bernard Brothers Construction in 1978, has been thoroughly "Twisted" by Rocky Mountain Construction. The 128-foot-long first drop now is a steeper 80 degrees, sending the 24-passenger trains at up to 57 mph through wild elements such as the zero-G roll (left).
COURTESY SIX FLAGS MAGIC MOUNTAIN

outward-angled twists. It sets the ideal tone for a ride that will have passengers both gasping and laughing by its end.

Once at the top of the right, or blue-tracked, side of the familiar, 121-foot lift, the smooth, now-more-steeply-inclined 80-degree first drop — and the copious amount of airtime it fuels — leaves the Colossus of old far behind. The roughness and sluggishness that characterized the earlier coaster's latter years is dissolved by a diving and steeply banked turnaround that leads into a few short hills and a graceful zero-G roll before speeding over a couple more short hills and twisting back around to the left side of the lift hill, which marks the start of the green-tracked, and more intensely acrobatic, leg of the course.

Here, if operational adherence to the careful timing worked out by RMC is maintained (as it was, for the most part, on media day), the sensations of racing and dueling are set in motion as two trains ascend the lift side by side.

After the drop, the green track experience cuts loose on the turnaround, executing the "High Five" element with an outward-right-banked turn that mirrors the inward banking of

the blue track's train just a few feet away. The green-tracked train then twists quickly back to the left and down into a double dip before shooting up into the stunning "Top Gun Stall" element — an upside-down section of track that provides a lingering bat's eye view of the other train as it negotiates its own inversion. This breathless maneuver is followed by some rolling hills and two turns into the brake run.

Rabjohn summed it up best: "It's not your daddy's Colossus."

In actuality, RMC's founder and owner, Fred Grubb, and design engineer Alan Schilke, the former Arrow Dynamics head engineer who made his mark on the industry in 2001 with the concept for SFMM's fourth-dimension steel coaster, X, can claim primary parental responsibility for Twisted Colossus. According to Grubb, the park approached RMC about two years ago to discuss ways to improve its aging woodie.

"It was a matter of Alan coming up with something unique," Grubb told *Amusement Today*. "We eventually developed about three different options, which were discussed thoroughly with Six Flags and the group there."

► See **COLOSSUS**, page 24



RMC

Reriding coaster history

THIS IS HOW WE ROLL

TWISTED AND WICKED



Photo courtesy of SFNE

www.rockymtnconstruction.com
Ibox Track Patent US 8,590,455

208.772.8181

Photo courtesy of SFMM

►CYCLONE

Continued from page 22

the roller coaster world.” After he finished his remarks, Winkler left the crowd with this, “Today’s the day. The lines are short!”

The queue area theming is nicely done. It is designed to resemble equipment a storm chaser might use, integrated with TV monitors showing weather forecasters warning of the impending cyclone. Other theming conveys the powerful force that Mother Nature can unleash.

As the queue snakes toward the station, riders get a great view of a good portion of the ride including many of the elements they are about to experience. The station is decked out with posters created to look like front page storm headlines and coverage from various regional newspapers over the decades. This visual along with the operator’s uniforms keep the theming consistent.

Once on board, the lift hill is steeper and faster than a lift normally associated with a wood coaster. The 78 degree first drop is followed by the first of several overbanked turns. After a few bunny hops it is into the signature 200 degree banked stall, then to another overbanked turn, followed by a double down element. The resulting air time leads into the first of two outward



The second g-roll, located near the end of the Wicked Cyclone ride, gives passengers a very close to the ground feel.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS NEW ENGLAND

banked hills, a zero g-roll hill and more short hops. Next up, is the “Driver’s Ed” turn (as designer Alan Schilke refers to it). This is a series of three banked turns. Then another first, the double reverse bank air hill comes into play. The second g-roll is near the end of the ride. A few more quick turns and the ride is hitting the brakes, all the while providing 14 extreme air time opportunities for its passengers.

Throughout the ride there is the feeling the train is going to go one direction, when it actually goes another. (Three left turns actually feel like, left, right, left.) This feature adds to the overall excitement of Wicked Cyclone. Innovation and intensity would best describe Wicked Cyclone, the smooth and fast ride that nev-

er lets up and keeps the crowd wanting to come back for more.

Rocky Mountain Construction kept the old footings and as much wood as they could and rebuilt the ride with their I-Box steel track while adding elements that would not have been possible on a traditional wood coaster. Designed by Alan Schilke, the ride incorporates many innovative features. Schilke came up with a design last year that got tweaked over the past 10 months to make the ride even more exciting. Schilke, while working at Arrow Dynamics, made his mark in the industry by designing the 4th Dimension roller coaster, X, (Six Flags Magic Mountain). Schilke along with Rocky Mountain Construction founder Fred Grubb went on to design Iron Horse

/I-Box track, an all-steel track replacement system for wooden roller coasters. New Texas Giant at Six Flags Over Texas (Arlington, Texas) was the first installation of this track technology in 2011.

Schilke was asked about what he was trying to accomplish with the Wicked Cyclone project. “I began the proposal to the park with trying to revive the original Cyclone’s first drop and turn. A lead carpenter that works on the ride was viewing the animation of this first proposal and stated ‘If that’s all you’re going to do with it, we might as well keep it as it is.’” He continued, “We were not allowed to make the ride taller than the original structure, so this was quite the dilemma. The steep 45 degree lift was included in the design to achieve the max lift height earlier in the straight. Now the new down drop could be created which could reach all the way to the ground before entering the first over-bank turn.”

The ride is currently running with steel under wheels. As Schilke explains, “Wicked Cyclone is running a few steel wheels temporarily in order to help knock the paint off of the rails quicker, and smooth the surface of the underlying steel track.” He continued, “The ‘polishing’ of the track will reduce the amount of gummy paint sticking to the nylon and polyurethane wheels,

and will help the nylon and polyurethane wheels glide around the corners. The coaster is running well, but it should pick up even more speed near the end of the ride as the year progresses.”

Was Schilke pleased with the results? “Each RMC ride produced gets smoother as we improve. As the ride gets smoother, the elements can come at you faster, and the designed G-forces can get pushed higher. What I am most satisfied with on Wicked Cyclone is how many elements we were able to pack in the space, and how relentless it can be on a fast run all the way to the end.”

When asked about working with the Six Flags New England staff, Schilke said, “They have been as nice and receptive as we’ve ever had. I’ll do whatever I can for them.” He relayed that there are three projects in the works for 2016 and one in Sweden for 2017. He would not reveal the parks; however it is believed that the work will be at Six Flags properties.

John Winkler is pleased with what he sees with Wicked Cyclone. “This brings another super thrill ride to the property to balance the audience — a winning formula. All four corners (of the park) are now high through-put,” he said. Winkler continued, “Everyone needs that I-Box technology. Six Flags embraced the technology from the start.”

►COLOSSUS

Continued from page 22

This particular design was what everybody agreed to.”

The early part of RMC’s conceptual process involved riding the old Colossus.

“Typically on a rebuild, Alan and I and our group will go down to ride and study the previous coaster, and then figure out what we can and can’t do with the existing footprint,” said Grubb, adding that Twisted Colossus was the most complex of his company’s wooden coaster projects due to its two-track design.

The problems with Colossus, he noted, are common to most wooden coasters.

“The existing tracks get rebuilt so many times,” Grubb said. “Without just putting on a whole new wood track, you’re fighting a battle in which you have to keep replacing pieces and sections. Traditional wood tracks get to a point where you’re just fixing them all the time.

“Colossus was always an iconic ride; it was always a good ride. But fatigue took over. The big advantage to putting the new

I-Box track on it is that it greatly reduces maintenance in the future. Also, it allows us to add new elements to the ride.”

With regard to some of the giddier acrobatics Twisted Colossus performs along its course, Grubb laughed when it was suggested that his team devises these extreme coaster moves with a fiendish grin.

“Yeah, that’s true somewhat,” he said. “Alan is a genius at coming up with new ideas, as well as our team. A goal is that we want everybody to be able to ride the ride, and to do that, we have to make it extremely smooth. And that’s what we’ve found with our rides: everybody can enjoy these experiences even though they are extremely aggressive. The reaction to Twisted Colossus has been huge.”

Getting to that point has its challenges, Grubb acknowledged — especially on a rebuild project such as this one.

“Just to get everything figured out, and the time that takes, is a challenge,” he said. “It’s harder to rebuild than it is to build new. So we do the best we can to accurately survey an existing coaster. You have to be on top



Rocky Mountain Construction's signature IBox Track and custom trains, which have spherical bearing hitches, allow Twisted Colossus to perform the "High Five" and two inversions among a whopping 18 airtime lifts.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS MAGIC MOUNTAIN

of the project all of the time with both design and build so that you can be prepared to handle the unknowns.”

One surprise that caught RMC and SFMM off guard was a construction-sparked fire at the top of the Colossus lift hill late last summer. Grubb said it was a relatively minor setback.

“We had a little bit of clean-up to do. We had to cut the coaster down further beyond the burnt areas and build it back up. It probably added about 10 days to our work schedule.”

RMC takes pride in using

American-made materials and maintaining quality control by doing all its track and train production in-house.

The Twisted Colossus trains themselves are marvels of engineering — their cars connected with spherical bearing hitches that allow for the coaster’s serpentine undulations and rapid directional changes. The seating’s comfort is the result of “a tremendous amount of time doing ergonomic testing,” said Grubb, while the redundancy built into RMC’s “vigorously tested,” harness-free hydraulic restraint system and

magnetic braking system ensures passenger safety.

RMC was happy to leave some Twisted Colossus tasks to other professionals: SFMM handled the control systems, while Baynum Painting of Newport, Ky., had up to 25 workers onsite for three months pressure-washing the wooden structure and applying about 5,000 gallons of Sherwin Williams Extra White premium acrylic paint.

Describing RMC’s working relationship with Six Flags as “excellent,” Grubb lauded the team effort on Twisted Colossus. “It’s almost a partnership, in some cases, because they’re working on the controls while we’re working on the coaster. We have to mesh rather closely. And they’ve been really good to us.”

During media day, SFMM’s Bonnie Rabjohn expressed similar praise for RMC. “We sincerely appreciate everything they put into Twisted Colossus,” she said. “Our two companies have really worked hand in hand to make this new attraction come to fruition.”

She added confidently: “We’ve hit the mark this time, hands down.”

New Maurer Laff Trakk coaster opens at Hersheypark

AT: B. Derek Shaw

bdshaw@amusementtoday.com

HERSHEY, Pa. — Laff Trakk — Hersheypark's latest roller coaster opened for the Memorial Day weekend with a media preview May 19. Billed as the first indoor, spinning, glow-coaster in the United States, the ride theming harkens back to the fun houses that graced the park throughout the years.

Built by Maurer AG (formerly Maurer Söhne) in München, Bavaria, Germany, the \$14 million dollar ride is located between the Whip and Midway tent in the Midway America section of the park. Laff Trakk is on ground that formerly housed two kiddie rides — Pony Parade and Granny Bugs. Both have been relocated very close by to a former food concession trailer area.

The media event kicked off with remarks from Kathy Burrows, manager of Public Relations, followed by Hersheypark General Manager Kevin Stumpf. "Laff Trakk is designed so most family members can ride. We blended the history of Hersheypark with today's technology. Laff Trakk is a 21st century version of the fun house." Stumpf also paid homage to their founder, Milton Hershey, when explaining this part family coaster, part dark ride, "His vision is our focus." The new ride pays tribute to previous fun house attractions at Hersheypark over the years (Fun House, (later called Whoops), Death Valley, (later called Laugh Land and Funland).

Wolfgang Brost, vice president Sales & Marketing for Maurer AG was pleased with the results of all the ride companies coming together to create the ride (Hersheypark, Raven Sun Creative, LA ProPoint and Maurer). "Hersheypark is a totally professional park — it was great pleasure to work with them. It went smooth from the first day," he said.

Brost said the ride is based on Disneyland Paris' Crush's Coaster (a Maurer Spinning Coaster 2000) in regard to layout, without the pre-show element. From that point forward is where this ride is different with the special effects and lighting provided by Raven Sun Creative, Middle Grove, N.Y. They are



Clockwise from top left: Laff Trakk's building is impressive with its height topping out at 75 feet; once inside, guests are entertained with fun house mirrors in the queue line; now on the 1,400-foot-long coaster, riders spin their way through fun house-like scenes and numerous coaster elements. COURTESY HERSHEY PARK; QUEUE LINE AT/B. DEREK SHAW

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Visitors enter the queue with a full size vintage Laffin' Sal to greet them. It is on loan from the Allen Theater, An-nville, Pa. and is said to be one of the last ones manufactured in the mid 1960s. From there the inside portion of the line features a series of various distorted mirrors guests walk by, allowing them to carry on and have fun in preparation for the upcoming ride. They are all reminiscent of vintage fun houses found at most amusement parks and traveling carnivals of yesteryear. The station is very bright and colorful as well.

Once onboard the individual four seat cars (two front and two back), riders on Laff Trakk take off inside the large room (130 feet long by 75 feet high) with plenty of black lights and neon colored props. After ascending the 50 foot lift hill, riders go through a clown's mouth, zany picture frames, "fire and flames," a snake charmer, past a three

story stack of cards and other colorful carnival motif items.

Laff Trakk elements along the 1,400 feet of track include an Immelman turn, multiple high-banked curves (85-degree maximum) along with numerous camelback air time hills, serpentines and curves. The cars start spinning about half way through the ride, when entering the circus tent themed area, continuing for the remainder of the ride cycle. Laff Trakk comes to a stop 70 seconds later using magnetic brakes. Because weight and rider placement is different each time, Laff Trakk delivers a different sensory experience each ride. No two rides are exactly alike, further enhancing the guests' experience.

The 42-inch height requirement makes this an ideal ride for most of the family, except for the smallest children. (This is Reese's, in Hersheypark ride height language.) The back-to-back seating with single cars is the smoothest way to offer a spinning element, allowing all members of the family to enjoy this feature. Brost called

this design, family aggressive. He continued, "This is a true family ride. There is no age limit — the elderly can go too."

Louis Alfieri, principal/chief creative officer of Raven Sun Creative attended the media event as well. He said, "We had a wonderful collaboration. They (Hersheypark) are a great team to work with. They are dedicated to their consumer base. The history here adds an element to the attraction. It was fun to participate with that." Alfieri continued, "The team did an amazing job to make sure the quality was there with a balance. I hope we get to work with them again in the future."

Alfieri was the Creative Director at Universal Studios for the Transformers ride prior to the creation of Raven Sun. With Laff Trakk, he said, "It is nice to have something not media based — not all screen based."

LA ProPoint (based in Sun Valley, Ca.) fabricated and installed Laff Trakk's painted scenic backdrops and steel-framed pass-through el-

ements. They worked closely with Hersheypark and Raven Sun Creative on the design, developing their concept work into shop drawings, engineered for the facility and coaster layout.

LA ProPoint also created funhouse mirrors, a fortune-teller's table with crystal ball effects and floating paraphernalia, a palace tunnel, oversized pass-through picture frames, fire rings, and giant playing cards.

All ride area elements were UV painted for a black light effect, while queue areas were painted for white light. All black light elements were installed above, around, and through the ride track and ride structure by LA ProPoint riggers.

"We are honored to be a critical part of Laff Trakk, Hersheypark's 13th rollercoaster, which takes riders on an unforgettable journey through a 21st century fun house," notes Mark Riddlesperger, founder and president of LA ProPoint. "With the indoor glow lights and installation of iconic fun house items, our contribu-

► See LAFF, page 26



LA ProPoint fabricated and installed painted scenic backdrops and pass-through elements on Laff Trakk. Above, the colorful fortuneteller's table wraps around part of the layout, greeting riders as they speed by.
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LAFF

Continued from page 25

tions will ensure that riders enjoy the rollercoaster experience of a lifetime."

At night the exterior lighting of the Laff Trakk building is striking. The building features LED lights that project up onto the multiple large panels surrounding the top of the structure. They are operated with a DMX controller, creating the ability to have the lights change different colors and fade in and out.

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Laff Trakk
Hersheypark, Hershey, Pa.

Location

Midway America section
between the Whip
and Midway Tent

Manufacturer/Type

Maurer AG/
Spinning Coaster 2000

Supporting Suppliers

Raven Sun,
Theming Consultant;
LA ProPoint, Theming
Elements Consultant;
Visual Terrain,
Lighting Consultant

Height/Speed/Length

50 feet/40 mph/1,400 feet

Features

360 degree free spinning
rotation of each vehicle;
Immelman turn;
Multiple high-banked
curves; Camelback airtime
hills and curves

Ride Time/Hourly Capacity

70 seconds/850 pph

Ride Vehicle/Color Scheme

Seven, 4 passenger cars
seated back to back/
Violet

Structure Color Scheme

Black structure and track
with black light thematics

Braking System

Combination magnetic
and pinch brakes

Height Restriction

48 inches

Projected Cost

\$14 million USD

Ride Opening

May 22, 2015

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Newly unveiled Gerstlauer ride emphasizes family fun

Rewind Racers coaster appeals to all ages at Adventure City

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

STANTON, Calif. — If roller coaster riding is an underrated family activity, the Ansdell clan, which has deep roots in this small city on the southwest border of Anaheim, bumped it to the top of the fun must-do list on June 5.

That's when Adventure City finally introduced Rewind Racers, an ambitious project for the three-acre fun spot that had been more than two years in the making, to the media. Members representing four generations of the family that owns and operates "The Little Theme Park that's Big on Family Fun" were on hand to board the first official train out of the station.

Immediately prior, Ansdells of varying ages lined up on the stairway to the loading platform for a photo op. "We don't have enough steps," quipped Allan Ansdell, Jr., Adventure City's president, waving a microphone in front of the crowd. He added with a laugh: "They all work

somewhere here in the park."

For Ansdell, who conceived and has managed Adventure City successfully for two decades in an Orange County amusement market dominated by the Disneyland Resort and Knott's Berry Farm, the unveiling of Rewind Racers was a crowning moment.

"For our 20th anniversary, we wanted to do something really exciting," he said. "So we retired our coaster that was built in the '50s, TreeTop Racers [Miller wild mouse], which we had here for almost 15 years. For a new coaster, we were looking for something unique... [Rewind Racers] is the only family shuttle coaster in North America."

Adventure City's purchase of the ride from German manufacturer Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GMBH was brokered by Adam Sandy of Ride Entertainment Group of Companies.

Stanton Mayor Al Ethans, one of several local dignitaries in attendance, presented



Adventure City's new family shuttle coaster from Gerstlauer, Rewind Racers, zips passengers through some twisting forward and backward paces. R&R Creative Amusement Designs supplied the ride's colorful theming and loading station video preshow, featuring Max the Mechanic (above, lower left).

AT/DEAN LAMANNA; COURTESY RICK BASTRUP/R&R CREATIVE AMUSEMENT DESIGNS (PRESHOW)



Stanton City Council Member Rigoberto Ramirez (above, left) and other special guests were invited to ride Rewind Racers a day before the coaster opened to the public. Rick Bastrup, co-founder of R&R Creative Amusement Designs, and park president Allan Ansdell, Jr. (above, upper right) celebrated the project's completion.

COURTESY ADAM SANDY/RIDE ENTERTAINMENT

(ABOVE, LEFT AND LOWER RIGHT); AT/DEAN LAMANNA

Ansdell with a proclamation of commendation before conducting the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "What the Ansdells have done for our city, and for the neighborhood, is phenomenal," he told *Amusement Today* afterward. "Adventure City is a good place, a safe place. All my grandkids came here when they were younger, and now they're bringing their kids."

The debut of Rewind Racers also was a full-circle milestone for Rick Bastrup, co-founder of Anaheim-based R&R Creative Amusement Designs — the original designer of Adventure City — which provided all the racecar theming elements and wrote and produced the video preshow for the new coaster. "I used to come out to [adjacent, Ansdell family-owned] Hobby City all the time," he told AT. "The train shop, rock shop and stamp shop were some of my favorite places when I was a

kid."

After a few rides on Rewind Racers, Ansdell family matriarch Yvonne Ansdell, whose parents established Hobby City in 1955, shared with AT a bit of insight into her son Allan's ambition in adding Adventure City to the property in 1994. She recalled how, at age 18, he insisted to her and her husband, Allan Sr., that Hobby City — already home to a train ride — needed more attractions.

"I said, 'Allan, if you want to have a feasibility study done, then we'll consider it.' Which he did, spending \$10,000 of his own money.

"For him to get 17 rides and attractions on this little piece of property, he had to really work on it," she said. "He absolutely loves it, and we're so proud of him. He's made it so that the land can stay [in the family] for more generations."

•adventurecity.com

FAST FACTS

Name/Park

Rewind Racers/
Adventure City
Stanton, Calif.

Type

Family shuttle coaster

Height/Max. Speed

40 feet/28 mph

Ride Vehicle

One seven-car train
(14 passengers)

Height Requirement

39 inches

Design/Engineering

Gerstlauer Amusement
Rides GmbH
Münsterhausen, Germany

Cost

Approx. \$2.5 million

Opening

June 6, 2015

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Flying Turns DVD now available at Knoebels

ELYSBURG, Pa. — The amusement industry never thought it could be done, again. While only seven of these rides were built in depression-era U.S.A., none survived past 1974. After seven years, three different train designs and switching out the final section in the wooden trough, the Knoebels Flying Turns opened on October 4, 2013 to rave reviews. Heralded by many as one of the most significant roller coaster milestones the past 60 years. StoryWorksTV was there from the beginning documenting the ground breaking in late 2006 through the opening night ceremonies in 2013.

The 60 minute documentary, told via the

people being interviewed, is an account of the peaks and valleys of this monumental project. Fueled by the interest of a young Dick Knoebel who rode one as a child and the passion of coaster designer John Fetterman, the "new" classic roller coaster took shape one screw and board at a time. In addition to interviews with Knoebel and Fetterman, other interviews include: Project Manager Jim Martini, Construction Consultant Leonard Adams, designer Mike Boodley and others.

To obtain a copy e-mail: info@knoebels.com or call: 1-800-ITS4FUN.

—B. Derek Shaw



Canada's Wonderland season highlighted with entertainment

VAUGHAN, Ontario — As Canada's Wonderland is in full swing, the park is showcasing one of its most extensive special event line-ups in park history. Alongside new attractions in Splash Works, Typhoon and Splash Station, the 2015 season is filled with plenty of family entertainment.

"Canada's Wonderland is always striving to provide our guests with great entertainment value and their best day of summer experience," said Norm Pirtovshek, Canada's Wonderland general manager. "For 2015, we are excited to bring our live shows to a new level with an outstanding line-up of special events, and live entertainment, which will be highlighted by our four touring shows in International Showplace."

The new entertainment offerings playing at various this summer include:

• **West Coast Lumberjack Show:** Internationally recognized for their daredevil skills, these lumberjacks compete in Log Rolling, Tree Climbing, Axe Throwing, Chainsaw Carving, and more.

• **Chinese Acrobats:** The Chinese Acrobats showcases amazing displays of contortion, flexibility, and control as they push the envelope of human possibility with juggling dexterity and balancing feats.

• **Ultimate Thrills Circus:** The Ultimate Thrills Circus features the Cybertron Motorcycle, Russian Swing, Aerial Ring, Wheel of Destiny and the insanities of circus clown – Renaldo.

• **X-Treme Wheels Stunt Show:** The CrazeCrew stunt team takes over International Showplace and performs their world class skills, and incredible tricks on BMX bikes, skateboards, inline skates, and next-generation pogo sticks.



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Eight-seat S&S Screamin' Swing also added Fun Spot America, Gatorland join forces to debut Gator Spot

AT: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

ORLANDO, Fla. — Gatorland, the Alligator Capital of the World and Fun Spot America-Orlando recently marked the grand opening of Gator Spot, a 15,000-square-foot reptile oasis. City of Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer was on hand for the official ribbon-cutting on May 11, 2015.

The \$1 million attraction features more than 100 alligators including a rare leucistic "white" alligator, one of only 12 in the world. In addition, Gator Spot showcases an array of exotic birds, snakes, lizards, and two gigantic aquariums filled with baby alligators. Guests may also participate in alligator feedings and snap photographs with the resident reptiles.

"Gator Spot is not only a welcome addition to International Drive — and the only place on I-Drive that tourists can see 12-foot alligators — this attraction is creating jobs. It truly is a fantastic partnership between two of Central Florida's largest privately-owned theme parks, Gatorland and Fun Spot America-Orlando," said City of Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer.

"For many years, Gatorland has investigated opportunities to expand our brand



Fun Spot America-Orlando has opened Gator Spot, in conjunction with Gatorland.
COURTESY FUN SPOT

into other major tourist destinations, and given the culture of our two businesses we knew Fun Spot America-Orlando would be a perfect fit," said Mark McHugh, Gatorland's president & CEO. "We are thrilled with the new attraction and are looking forward to providing yet another memorable experience visitors to International Drive can share with their friends and families."

In addition to Gator Spot and Gatorland's 110-acre original tourist attraction and wildlife preserve located on South Orange Blossom Trail, Gatorland is also celebrating a 10-year partnership with the Gaylord Palms Resort. Gaylord's "Best of Florida" exhibit is home to 15 juvenile alligators and 30 native species of turtles. Gatorland also provides baby alligators and education programs to numerous science

centers and educational institutions across the U.S. and logs thousands of hours in school field trips every year.

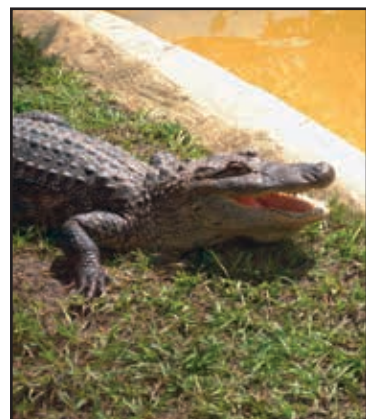
"We are excited to be working with Gatorland and the history they bring to Orlando and our industry," said John Arie Jr., chief operating officer, Fun Spot

America-Orlando Theme Parks. "While Gator Spot is a great place to learn all about alligators and some of the amazing creatures that call Florida home, being able to actually hold a real life alligator is huge!"

Along with Gator Spot, the park also chose to ex-

pand its impressive ride arsenal with yet another new attraction, Space Invader. An eight-seat Screamin' Swing supplied by S&S/Sansei, the new ride is a virtual twin of the Hot Seat at Fun Spot Kissimmee.

"The Space Invader was added to our Orlando location and was an immediate hit with our guests," added Fun Spot's David Hummer. "We thought it would do well, we have one at our Kissimmee location, but we were really surprised at the numbers and how it leaped near the top for ridership. It is really an amazing ride and we have been very happy with the way our guests have embraced it."



Fun Spot America-Orlando and Florida's Gatorland recently collaborated and opened Gator Spot, a 15,000-square-foot reptile oasis, on I-Drive. The \$1 million attraction features more than 100 alligators including an rare leucistic "white" alligator, one of only 12 in the world.
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Mack spinning coaster to strike Busch Gardens Tampa in 2016

TAMPA, Fla. — Busch Gardens Tampa plans to put a spin on family thrills in 2016 with Cobra's Curse, a new spinning roller coaster to be supplied by Germany's Mack Rides. It will be the only coaster of its kind in the world to utilize a vertical elevator-style lift system.

To be located in the Egypt area of the park, thrill-seeking explorers will come face-to-face with an 80-foot Cobra icon, trek over the park's Serengeti Plain and discover the mysteries of an Egyptian archeological excavation.

Cobra's Curse will utilize eight two-car trains that will each seat eight riders, two abreast. The vertical elevator lift will raise the trains (locked in a horizontal position) to a height of 70 feet before releasing them onto the 2,100-foot-long course. During their adventure, guests will be treated to speeds of 40 mph with no two ride experiences being the same thanks to the unpre-



Germany's Mack Rides will supply a new spinning roller coaster for Busch Gardens Tampa in 2016. Dubbed Cobra's Curse, the ride will be the only coaster of its kind in the world to utilize a vertical elevator-style lift system. Sporting an Egyptian theme, Cobra's Curse will stand 70 feet tall and feature 2,100 feet of track and speeds of 40 mph. Each experience will be unique thanks to the unpredictable spinning action of the ride vehicles, which will be comprised of eight two-car trains. COURTESY BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA

dictable spinning action of the cars.

AT spoke with Mark Rose, vice president of design and engineering for Busch Gardens Tampa, about the choosing Mack Rides for this project as well as the decision to go

with a vertical elevator as opposed to a traditional incline lift. "Busch Gardens is always working to create unique and thrilling experiences, and we have worked with Mack Rides to do just that with Cobra's Curse. The vertical lift

is just one of the components that make this ride the only one of its kind in the world and we know it's something that guests will be excited to experience. Plus, much like you have come to expect from thrill rides at Busch Gardens,

Cobra's Curse will be integrated with guest pathways providing a thrilling perspective for onlookers."

Mack Rides is represented in North America by Bob Dean of Florida-based Leisure Labs LLC.

SeaWorld Orlando will unleash Mako, B&M hypercoaster in 2016

ORLANDO, Fla. — SeaWorld Orlando will continue its climb into the roller coaster major leagues next summer when it introduces Mako, a 200-foot-tall hypercoaster that will streak along 4,760 feet of steel track at speeds of 73 mph. Named for one of the ocean's fastest known sharks, Mako will take the record of being Orlando's tallest, fastest and longest roller coaster.

"On Mako, you'll experience what it's like to be this apex predator, surging through the water at top speed and chasing prey throughout a massive reef," said Brian Morrow, SeaWorld's attraction creative director. "It will be a wild mix of fear, thrills and fun."

Mako will be supplied by Bolliger & Mabillard, the renowned Swiss firm that created SeaWorld's Manta and Kraken as well as Sheikra, Montu and Kumba at Busch Gardens Tampa. The non-looping coaster will be characterized by steep drops, over-banked turns and numerous instances of airtime.

SeaWorld's new hypercoaster will be the centerpiece of an immersive two-acre shark-themed plaza that will also include Shark Encounter, Sharks Underwater Grill,

shops, shark and shipwreck theming and educational experiences featuring sharks.

The entire realm is created to make guests feel they're underwater, part of the group of sharks and toothy animals that have taken over a shipwrecked reef. In the plaza, guests will learn about the impact humans are having on sharks and why these animals are critical to the environment. Sharks are hunted for their fins — considered a delicacy in certain countries — and thousands are caught accidentally in nets. Several species of sharks are on the verge of extinction.

"It's this blend of education and thrills, immersing guests in an underwater world, that sets a SeaWorld ride apart from others," said Morrow. "Our fans will love how Mako complements our other rides. Kraken is big, monstrous and twisty. Manta is massive and glides smoothly, taking you on a flight like a huge ray. Mako is entirely different. It's streamlined and fast, just like a mako shark. There's no wasted motion, it's all speed and dives."

Additionally, Mako will use a unique sound system to enhance the experience, and



SeaWorld Orlando will unleash Florida's first hypercoaster next summer when it introduces Mako, above, a non-looping thriller from Bolliger & Mabillard. Below, Mako will serve as the centerpiece of an immersive two-acre shark-themed plaza that will also include Shark Encounter, Sharks Underwater Grill, shops and more. COURTESY SEAWORLD

not just for those on the ride. The full score of Mako can be heard and follows riders out of the station and up the lift hill. Custom surround effects and musical scores fill the realm, changing as the coaster dives through the area.

At night, specialty lights will accent the coaster trains, realm and track, flickering and shimmering, simulating fish being scattered by a mako on the hunt.



El Diablo arrives at Six Flags Great Adventure

Ride is one of four Larson Giant Loops delivered in 2015 to Six Flags parks

AT: B. Derek Shaw
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JACKSON, N.J. — In May, Six Flags Great Adventure opened their newest thrill ride playing on a “devilish” theme. El Diablo is a seven story tall Giant Loop from Larson International, in Plainview, Texas.

The giant, fiery red El Diablo looping ride is located next to the El Toro wooden roller coaster in the Mexican-themed Plaza del Carnaval section of the park.

Standing at just under 80 feet tall, this freestanding 360 degree loop features a high speed train, with riders sit facing each other. The train rocks back and forth, like a pendulum until quickly gaining momentum. At the apex the train momentarily stops upside down, reverses direction, and starts all over again. Riders experience six inversions (three forward rotations, three backward rotations) before the train finally comes to a stop.

Park President John Fitzgerald was asked why the name El Diablo was selected. He replied, “The Jersey devil has deep roots in our

state's history, and inspired the theme for our newest thrill ride.” Fitzgerald commented on the location of the ride in the park, “El Diablo is the perfect addition to Plaza del Carnaval, as it appeals to both thrill seekers and families alike. Rides like El Toro and Tango attract a wide audience to this area, which also provides ample opportunities for dining, shopping and relaxation from the excitement of the world’s largest theme park,” Fitzgerald added.

Riders must be at least 48 inches tall.

Other Giant Loops opened at three other Six Flags properties this season: The Joker Chaos Coaster, Six Flags Over Georgia, Austell, Ga.; Bourbon Street Fireball, Six Flags America, Largo Md. and Daredevil Chaos Coaster, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Vallejo, Ca.

Editor's note: Six Flags marketed all four of these rides in 2015 as roller coaster, however AT elected not to acknowledge them as coasters based on the rides not being listed in the Roller Coaster Database (rcdb.com).



For the 2015 season, Six Flags Great Adventure has opened this newest looping thriller, El Diablo. The ride was one of four Giant Loops delivered to Six Flags parks this season by Larson International.
COURTESY SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE



Carowinds announces closure of iconic Thunder Road



When it opened in 1976, Thunder Road utilized one-of-a-kind rolling stock from Jetstream, the last wooden coaster designed by John Allen for Chicago's legendary Riverview Park (1904-1967). The original trains sported thematic elements related to the 1958 Robert Mitchum film, which inspired the racing coaster's name. Since 1980, Thunder Road has featured several sets of four-car trains supplied by Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters. COURTESY CAROWINDS; AT/ SCOTT RUTHERFORD COLLECTION

AT: Scott Rutherford
srutherford@amusementtoday.com

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — In a move that surprised park guests and roller coaster enthusiasts alike, Carowinds recently announced that it would be closing Thunder Road, a major wooden racing coaster and one of the few rides surviving from the park's first years.

This is the announcement that appeared on Carowinds' Facebook page: “After 39 wonderful years and nearly 40 million scream-filled rides, Thunder Road will give its last race on July 26. The ride is being retired to make room for future family-fun attractions. Please join us this summer as we say good-bye to this iconic coaster.”

Opened in 1976, Thunder Road's name and theme were inspired by a 1958 Robert Mitchum crime-drama film of the same name. Thunder Road has the unique distinction of being the only wooden coaster capable of transporting guests through two states – North Carolina and South Carolina.

Since its debut, Thunder Road has safely carried more than 40 million riders over 39 seasons. It has consistently remained one of Carowinds' most popular attractions, and one that can handle more guests per hour than any of the other rides.

The announcement of Thunder Road's demise elicited a massive number of negative responses on social media from generations of Carowinds guests as well as coaster fans deriding the park's decision. More than 5,000 people signed online petitions and made Facebook comments in favor of keeping the coaster operational.

As of press time, it's unknown if any of this will sway Cedar Fair to rethink its plans. Such public outcry did manage to save a steel coaster at Six Flags Great America in 2002. The Schwarzkopf Whizzer, ironically built the same year as Thunder Road, remains in operation today.

AT asked Carowinds President Mike Fehnel to comment on Thunder Road's demise. “There comes a time when we celebrate the history and legacy of our favorite rides. This decision is part of a much bigger picture,” said Fehnel. “Carowinds is in the midst of a multi-year expansion giving guests the park Carolinians deserve in a growing Charlotte market. We have a lot of loyal fans and we listened to them. Their feedback told us families are craving time together in a setting where everyone can create and share memories that last a lifetime. Our upcoming 2016 announcement will allow them to do just that.”

Surf's Up at Taylor County Fair



Zamperla's portable Surf's Up was getting a great response on the midway of Miller Spectacular Shows, seen here at Taylor County Fair, Campbellsville, Ky., which ran May 29-June 6. This was Miller Spectacular Shows second year at the Taylor County Fair. This was also the carnival's second season with the Surf's Up, having purchased it in 2014. Attendance numbers weren't available right after the conclusion of the event, but fair officials said the numbers were on par with 2014. AT/SUE NICHOLS

FAIR BRIEFS

Frienden forms new company, purchases ORI

SALEM, Ore. — Albert Frienden, owner, Battech Enterprises, LLC, has formed a new company, Replacement Parts Resource LLC. Once formed, RPR LLC, then purchased all the assets of ORI LLC (formerly Oregon Rides), which now makes RPR LLC the sole provider of parts and services for Eyerly Rides, effective May 1.

Frienden said they have been busy with the manufacturing of parts for the Eyerly rides.

"I created a totally separate company for this because it really needed to be a separate entity," Frienden said, the second week of June. "We are really busy right now."

Tod Sherbourne, former owner of ORI LLC, has agreed to work for the new company to help with transitioning.

Clay County Fair sets attendance record

GREEN COVE SPRINGS, Fla. - Officials with the 2015 Clay County Agricultural Fair reported that a new attendance record was set at the 29th fair, which ran March 31-April 9.

Attendance was up 3.19 percent for a total of 113,591 guests. The 2014 attendance was 110,978 visitors. However, the new record fell just shy of the fair board's attendance goal of 115,000.

Deggeller Attractions provided the midway with over 40 rides including the Vertigo manufactured by A.R.M., Super Nova by Mondial, Enterprise by Huss, Century Wheel by Chance, Yo Yo by Chance, Cliff Hanger by Battech Enterprises, Fire Ball by Larson International, and Zipper by Chance.

First new Chance Rides Zipper in 15 years purchased by Skinners Amusements

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

WICHITA, Kan. — For the first time in 15 years, a new Chance Zipper is on a midway.

Skinners' Amusements took delivery of the new Zipper on June 5 and, according to Jeff Miller, carnival ride sales manager for Chance, who was on hand to see it open and told AT the response was great.

"Everything went very well," Miller said. "This is Phase I of the re-introduction of the Zipper. The whole lighting package is different from the older models. This new one comes with a fully programmable LED package."

Phase II will entail the re-development of the gondola.

"We are working on making an open car," Miller said. "We hope to have a model



Skinners' Amusements received delivery of a Chance Rides Zipper on one of their dates in northwest Illinois. The amusement company had wanted a new one, so Chance delivered, the first one that the company has manufactured in 15 years. Seen here in front of the new ride are, from left, Pat and Doug Skinner, Doug Jr. and Reneta Skinner, and Jeff Miller, sales manager, carnival market, Chance Rides.

COURTESY JEFF MILLER

ready for IAAPA (International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions) this year."

Phase III, set to be ready in about a year, will feature a modernized drive system.

Other than the lighting package of the Skinners' Zipper, however, everything is the same as the other models still seen in abundance on midways across the country. It features a vertical spinning and turning motion. The maximum height of the ride is 56 feet.

The segmented cable system dramatically decreases maintenance time and wheel wear. There is an electric cable drive with soft start and programmed ride cycles.

The powered hydraulic leveling jacks simplify setup and it transports easily on a single trailer.

Miller said even though it has been 15 years since Chance has manufactured a new Zipper, the ride is still a staple on

the midway.

Production of the Zipper was decreased at Chance when the company shifted a focus to more park production.

"But, we had a customer who had to have one," Miller said, speaking of the Skinners. "It is probably one of those things that wouldn't have happened if not for this customer. We are thankful for the Skinners to bring it back."



The new Skinners' Amusements Zipper is part of Phase I in bringing back the Chance ride. The biggest change to the new Zipper compared to the old version is a new LED lighting package. Engineering is underway for even more upgrades on future units.

COURTESY JEFF MILLER

FAST FACTS

**Ride/Opening/
Carnival Owner**
Zipper/June 5/
Skinners' Amusements

Capacity
12 total seats can
accommodate 2 adults
or 3 children per seat

Loading
2 seats simultaneously

Ride Speed/Time
7.5 rpm/2.5 minutes (max.),
2 minutes (recommended)

Other
56 feet maximum height;
40 kw maximum power
requirement; electro-
hydraulic, boom drive
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CARNIVAL LIGHTS

COMPILED: Pam Sherborne

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He's already introduced the world to some of the most bizarre carnival food creations, like deep-fried Kool-Aid, deep-fried Oreos and the triple decker Krispy Kreme cheeseburger. Now, **Charlie Boghosian** has introduced his newest food, the deep-fried Slim-Fast bar. He introduced his new creation at the 2015 **San Diego County Fair**, Del Mar, Calif., June 5-July 5.

Boghosian comes up with different foods every year. This year, in an effort to top himself, he deep-fried a diet bar. In a story by the *Huffington Post*, he said the method adds an estimated 500 calories to the 200 calories found in a Slim-Fast Chewy Chocolate Bar.

It's a diet bar breaded in pancake batter and fried, then dusted with powdered sugar and drizzled with chocolate.

"I was having a fry fest at my house where my family and friends bring things they think will fry well and I thought I'd deep-fry a Slim-Fast bar because it was a total oxymoron," he was quoted as saying.

The deep-fried Slim-Fast bar isn't Boghosian's only bizarre creation for this year. Also on the menu is a deep-fried peanut butter pickle, laced in powdered sugar and chocolate sauce.

Boghosian says both are selling well, but the Slim-Fast bar is getting better reviews.

The 2015 **San Bernardino County Fair**, Victorville, Calif., has come to a close and fair officials were reporting an increase across the board over the 2014 event. However, this year the fair was marred by tragedy.

Sabrina Gordon, a 31-year-old Navy veteran from Hesperia, died after falling 28 feet to the ground from the FreeDrop USA attraction Thursday night at the fair.

Details about Gordon's fall have not been released by San Bernardino County sheriff's investigators or fair officials.

Geoff Hinds, San Bernardino County Fair CEO/general manager, told a local news agency that it is difficult to produce fun under difficult conditions.

"This tragedy impacts everybody differently," Hinds said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the Gordon family."

Hinds said preliminary numbers indicated that attendance was up about eight percent this year over last. Carnival and food spending were also up.

Now in its 68th year, the San Bernardino County Fair runs seven days, however, this year was an adjustment to the usual run.

The fair opened Saturday, closed Tuesday and Wednesday and continued Thursday through Sunday.

The FreeDrop USA attraction was making its debut in California at the fair. It involves participants jumping 20, 28 or 36 feet off a scaffolding and onto a large airbag.

The **Wilson County Fair**, Lebanon, Tenn., brings in thousands of dollars for the local economy. County leaders said last month that's why they want to build a new expo center, but not everyone is on board.

The Wilson County Fair is one of the most well-attended fairs in the state of Tennessee. County officials want to make it even bigger by

adding a \$10 million, 86,000-square-foot expo center.

Wilson County Mayor **Randall Hutto** is all for the project. He said the new center could be used for other events outside of the fair such as sporting events, gun and knife shows, trade shows, and educational events.

He feels that a new center will bring in more people, thus more money for the county.

But not everyone in the county agrees. An effort by local citizens out knocking on doors for petition signatures want the funding for the center to be voted on by county residents. Opponents feel a private company should come in, build the center and take the risks.

The current plan is to break ground right after this year's county fair. But if the "No Expo" group gets enough signatures, that would definitely put a delay to any project.

The fair is scheduled to run Aug. 14-22 this year. **Amusements of America** will provide the midway.

An idea five years in the making is finally becoming a reality Sept. 3-7, 2015, at **Michigan International Speedway**, Brooklyn. In fact, lead local organizers **Phil Morgan** and **Terry Bonnell** have been working on this idea since the original **Michigan State Fair**, held at the state fairgrounds, was last held in 2009. Bonnell will be the fair general manager.

The grand vision of the fair focuses on creating positive awareness and promoting skilled trade opportunities, entertain fairgoers under the stars and to provide a unique experience with fair rides, games, food and camping.

A beer and wine garden and chance to participate in a ride and drive event on NASCAR's fastest track also will be offered.

Big Rock Amusements has been hired to provide the midway.

"We're excited they chose us and to add another huge event to MIS," **Roger Curtis**, MIS president, said at a June news conference. "Our goal has been to make MIS a year-round entertainment destination, and not only does this add to the economic development of the Irish Hills, but to the quality of life."

Booking the event at MIS was huge in the fair's development, Bonnell said at the news conference.

"If this fair was in some field, then fine no big deal," he said. "Being at MIS makes this a big deal. Even if this fair continues to grow, we'll never outgrow this place."

The **South Carolina State Fair**, Columbia, has partnered with Walgreens drug stores to make it easier for residents to buy fair tickets.

According to SC State Fair General Manager **Gary Goodman**, the state fair will sell tickets at more than 100 Walgreens stores around South Carolina, in the Charlotte region of N.C., as well as the Augusta, Ga., area stores.

The fair will run Oct. 14-25 at the fairgrounds in Columbia.

North American Midway Entertainment will provide the midway for this event.

Have State Fair or Midway news of interest? Email your news items to Pam Sherborne at: psherborne@amusementtoday.com.

Ohio State Fair balances the old with the new

LF Creative Group delivering new talking Smokey Bear icon

AT: Pam Sherborne
psherborne@amusementtoday.com

COLUMBUS, Ohio — State fair officials across the U.S. play a delicate balancing act. They want to keep the traditions of their fairs, but they also know that many fairgoers look forward to something new.

So when fair officials at the Ohio State Fair felt it was time to replace their "old" Smokey Bear, a 14.5-foot figure of the famous fire-prevention bear that had been greeting their fairgoers for the last 50 years for a "new" Smokey Bear, they knew they had to make it a labor of love and balance.

FAIR FOCUS

Plus, the \$80,250 it was going to cost for the "new" Smokey was a motivation to get it right.

Smokey Bear was brought into the wildfire prevention service in 1944 by the efforts of the U.S. Forest Service. Fifteen years after his debut, Smokey made his home at the Ohio State Fair. Constructed by the Ohio Division of Forestry's carpentry shop, he was made of a variety of materials including plywood, wire and fiberglass. And, he was outfitted with fabric "fur" and denim, the latter updated every eight to 10 years.

In the 1970s, he was updated with three primary movement mechanisms controlled by electric gear motors. All of these could be powered on and off separately, but once they were powered on, they moved constantly.

His head turned left and right. His mouth moved and his arms waved.

The first thing fair officials did when looking for a "new" version of Smokey was to hire Ohio company, LF Creative Group, to do the work. LF Creative Group was originally founded as LifeFormations in Bowling Green, Ky. The company opened an office in Cincinnati in 2013, and officially became LF Creative Group.

The new Smokey Bear was created very similarly to the old, about the same basic size,



This overview of the Ohio State Fair midway, which has played the Ohio event since 1993, shows not only the large extent of rides and attractions, but also a line of new trees in the middle of the midway. This corridor was created as a part of "Operation Shade" in 2013, a fair initiative to add more shade. New brick pavers were added as part of that initiative as were benches for additional seating.

COURTESY THE OHIO STATE FAIR

14 feet, and with very similar movements, the head moves left to right and up and down. The arm points, perfect for his signature phrase, "Only you can prevent wildfires." And, of course, the mouth moves.

"However these movements are air driven and can be operated with a control pad so each movement can be operated 'on call,'" said Alicia Shoults, the fair's marketing and public relations director. "For example, if someone is speaking to him at his left, he can turn his head in that direction, then speak with his mouth moving, then close his mouth. This will be a more realistic experience for fairgoers."

The new Smokey Bear has a hard exterior rather than the fabric fur.

And, he is ready for the 2015 fair, set for July 29-Aug. 9.

Fair dates back to 1846

The Ohio State Fair has a very long history dating back to 1846, when the Ohio Legislature created the 53-member Board of Agriculture. In those 169 years the fair has built many traditions. Some of them include the All-Ohio State Fair Band and the All-Ohio Youth Choir, founded in 1925 and 1963 respectively. The band and choir both have 200 members from across the state.

In the early 1900s, the Ohio State University and the Dairy Processors of Ohio sponsored

butter sculpting contests at the Ohio State Fair. The subjects of these contests were not restricted to specific things.

In 1903, the first butter cow and calf were featured at the fair, sculpted by A. T. Shelton & Company, distributors of Sunbury Co-Operative Creamery butter. New cow and calf sculptures have been created every year since and are housed in the 1900s-built Dairy Products Building.

The first Ohio State Fair

was planned for September 1849, after two years of holding successful District Fairs. But an outbreak of Asiatic cholera forced the cancellation of those plans. The following year, later dates were set to lessen the risk of cholera. Even so, Darius Lapham, the superintendent of the grounds, died of the disease just a few weeks before the opening date.

Camp Washington (two miles east of downtown Cincinnati) was the site of the first

Ohio State Fair, Oct. 2-4, 1850. The site was described as eight to 10 acres with grass slopes, shade trees and numerous tents. The grounds were enclosed by a 10-foot-high board fence. Cattle were tethered to a railing along the carriage road.

Admission to the first fair was 20 cents, but exhibitors could buy a \$1 badge for admission for their families. A visitor could also buy a \$1 badge for one gentleman and two ladies. Attendance that first year was estimated at 25,000 to 30,000 people, a significant attendance but far from the 916,724 it drew in 2014.

Ohio State Fair today

Today the Ohio State Fair still captures the imagination of fairgoers looking to find some days of yore. Yet, thousands of dollars are poured into the grounds for updates and upgrades on a regular basis.

Recent expenditures include: \$8.5 million renovation to the Gilligan Livestock Complex; two new buildings, one to open this year and the other to open in 2016, costing about \$38.5 million together; and \$1 million in paving improvements.

In the last two years, seven new ticket booths have been added and just prior to the 2014 fair, officials contracted for 4,250 feet of new seven-eighths wire rope cable for the SkyGlider, a permanent fair-owned attraction manufactured by O.D. Hopkins.



At left is a photo of the Ohio State Fair sometime in the 1960s showing Goodings Amusements Midway that played there for many years. Above is the O.D. Hopkins Sky Glider as seen in the early 1970s.

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BUSINESS, SAFETY, & CLASSIFIED

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Record rainfalls, storms in Texas impacting outdoor attractions

AT: Pam Sherborne

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VAN, Texas — Robby Parish spent the longest 15 seconds of his life on May 10.

Just after 8:45 p.m., he crouched in a home closet over his wife and two young children, holding fast to the closet's door knob, while an EF3 tornado, with winds between 135-150 mph, pulled violently against his grip from the other side.

Within seconds, the door, just above the knob, began to crack, as the winds continued to pull fiercely and without compassion. Seconds later, the ceiling of the closet ripped off. The sounds outside the closet were both deafening and sinister.

Then, there was quiet. He opened the closet door. He and his family stepped out onto a huge pile of rubble that just seconds before had been their home. They were uninjured, but had lost everything.



Above, Splash Kingdom's Marci Blevins is seen here at her brother's home after a Mother's Day tornado rips through Van, Texas. She found this flag in the mud behind the house. At right, the local McDonald's donated Happy Meals and bottled water for all of the students from Van, Texas that came to Splash Kingdom (Canton, Texas) for a field trip after the tornado. COURTESY SPLASH KINGDOM

"They had a 100 percent loss," said Johnny Blevins, owner of Splash Kingdom water parks and brother-in-law to Parish. "But, they didn't have a scratch on them. They even found their cat two days later."

"My wife (Marci Blevins, Parish's sister) and I went over the next day," Blevins said.

"We tried to pull some things out of the rubble. We pulled some clothes out, but ended up throwing them away the next day."

Blevins lives with his family in Canton, Texas, just about 15 miles from Van. But, Blevins said he was raised in Van and his family home there also was destroyed during that tornado.

Two people were killed in Van that night. Official reports state that 43 people were taken by emergency responders to local hospitals and many more taken by private vehicles.

Anywhere between 50 to 100 homes in this small Texas town were damaged. The elementary and intermediate schools both received significant damages.

But, to Blevins, his family had survived. That was all that mattered.

Along with the tornado outbreak, the State of Texas experienced its wettest month in May. Northern Texas was particularly hard hit. Monthly reports showed a record 16.96 inches of rain dumped on the



Dallas-Fort Worth area. Lubbock reported 12.12 inches, making it the second wettest May and Wichita Falls reported a record 17 inches of rain. Amarillo reported its second wettest May with 9.29 inches of rain.

Rain records also were set in the southeastern Texas regions. Austin and as far south as Corpus Christi also reported May records, with 17.59 inches and 14.32 inches respectively.

Widespread flooding was reported throughout the month essentially bringing most of Texas out of a multi-year drought.

So, in June, as the summer continued on, Blevins and his water and amusement park industry colleagues wondered how the rough May would impact their 2015 seasons.

Blevins owns five Splash Kingdom water parks, four in Texas (Canton, Gainesville, Hudson Oaks, and Amarillo) and one in Shreveport, La. Plans were to open two more in Texas, in Greenville and Nacogdoches, in 2015.

But, those plans have

changed. The Greenville location won't open until 2016.

"That park has pretty much been under water since February," Blevins said. "We were further along in the Nacogdoches park so we should be able to open there by July 1."

His other parks, although opening on time, have lost some operational days. And, just the threat of bad weather has kept numbers down.

Over in Lubbock, Texas, Joyland Park flooded three times in May, said David Dean, owner.

"We had as much as 42 to 48 inches of water in some areas of the park," Dean said. "It can get very depressing, but it is important that we try to remain positive. So, on the positive point, the water goes down really fast."

Dean and his staff, however, helped nature along in the drying process by using blowers, dryers, air compressors — "a lot of stuff."

In the first week of June, the park had pretty much dried out. After the dry out,

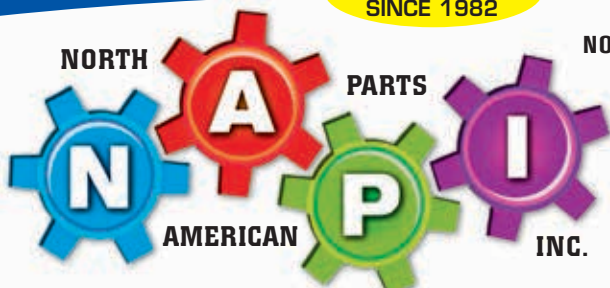
► See WEATHER, page 40



Joyland Park in Lubbock, Texas dealt with three flood events during the spring. Damaged asphalt is cut out of a walkway where almost 28 inches of water rushed through the park. COURTESY JOYLAND

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New rides, attractions position Casino Pier for further growth

2016 expansion eyed as plans for nearby Funtown Pier debated

AT: Dean Lamanna

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SEASIDE HEIGHTS, N.J. — Having fully reclaimed its berth as this central New Jersey shore resort's premier provider of boardwalk family fun, Casino Pier and its adjacent water park, Breakwater Beach, are flushing any lingering memory of Superstorm Sandy far out to sea with an ambitious, multimillion-dollar slate of summer improvements.

Already operating near the pier's north entrance is the new Shore Shot, a Double Shot drop tower from S&S-Sansei. A SkyCoaster was expected to debut shortly. Other new or improved attractions that will open over the course of this season:

- **Mountain Miniature Golf**, a 36-hole, multi-level course, will provide a new setting for club-swinging — complete with waterfalls and ocean views — at the corner of Ocean Terrace and Sherman Avenue, on the former site of the waterpark's Dockside Grill.

- **Seaside Speedway Go-Kart Track**, long a top draw at the pier, is being enlarged with additional twists and turns, and it will have a new pit location.

- **Breakwater Beach Waterpark** is adding a new wave pool called The Harbor designed by WhiteWater West Industries and manufactured by Air-Tech with Wizard Works. WhiteWater also has delivered two new slides: Salem's Scream... Oh My Cod, a drop slide, and Revere's Wild Ride, a serpentine slide. A new food and beverage location with a seashore town-themed design will be centrally located within the water park.

Maria Mastoris, marketing manager for the combined fun spot, told *Amusement Today* that Casino Pier is working with the Department of Environmental Protection, as well as state and local authorities, to obtain approvals for a reported \$3.5 million expansion over the beach at the north end of the existing pier. If all goes as planned, the new area,



Casino Pier and Breakwater Beach Waterpark have added new WhiteWater drop and serpentine slides (left) and an S&S Double Shot drop tower for 2015. The pier proper will hold a total of 23 rides by season's end. COURTESY CASINO PIER

which would increase the pier's current 300-by-350-foot dimensions to 500 by 350 feet, will accommodate a roller coaster and a Ferris wheel in 2016.

"We're looking forward to our new attractions and bringing more families to Seaside Heights," said Mastoris. "Our properties now have a great variety of things to do and we cannot wait until they all are operational. We are certain that our guest experiences will be greatly enhanced by all that we've done and will continue to do in the near future."

Meanwhile, in neighboring Seaside Park, the future of Funtown Pier, which also took a devastating hit from Superstorm Sandy in 2012 that was compounded by a massive fire in 2013, is taking longer to envision.

Initial rebuilding plans unveiled by owner Bill Major earlier this year garnered somewhat mixed public reaction in an informal session held by the Seaside Park Planning Board. Major has been pushing for a variance to a local height ordinance that would allow him to bring up to 10 rides to the site reaching between 200 and 300 feet. He also wants to install a couple dozen kiddie rides.



Business owners are supporting the pier's return, claiming its absence for several summers has created a negative economic ripple. A few residents, on the other hand, have expressed concerns about the visual impact and noise such large attractions would create.

Major has argued through representatives that the types of rides he wants to put in are crucial to the ongoing viability of the pier.

Funtown Pier had more than 30 rides when the hurricane struck. Major said he had secured a permit from the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act to resurrect the pier on its original footprint, a project that will cost a reported \$20 million. Some new pilings were put in over the winter.

In late May, Seaside Park's planning board approved the offering of beach buggy rides on the Funtown Pier site.

Presented by NJ ATV Rentals and Ocean County Powersports, the attraction, which requires passengers to wear helmets and goggles in addition to seatbelts, is designed to offer dune-hopping buggy thrills in stylish vehicles at speeds limited to 20 mph. It was expected to open as AT went to press.

•casinopiernj.com

►WEATHER

Continued from page 39

however, was to come the clean-up, repairs, and testing to get the park back open. He even had to lay new asphalt onto his midway.

"After the three floods and us trying to get into the park with heavy equipment to get things cleaned up, some of the asphalt on the midway buckled," he said.

Dean said there is a storm water draining system that forms a creek running beside his park. Over the past year, the city began diverting more storm water into that creek, which is one reason the park flooded so many times. He plans to go to city leaders and ask for some type of relief, such as a flood wall. His fear is, now that Texas is out of the drought, just a few inches of rain could lead to park flooding.

While Wichita Falls set rain records in May, Kent Lemasters, president and CEO of AmusementAquatic Management, which manages the city-owned Castaway Cove, said that park didn't experience any flooding. Yet, some operational days were lost due to the rains.

"But, the drought in Wichita Falls is over," said Lemasters. "As I understand it, the reservoirs are full. We are not hauling any water and we don't anticipate hauling any

water."

Because of the Stage 5 drought in the area last year, the city contracted to have well water hauled to the park to a cost of about \$70,000 for the season.

Castaway Cove did open on time this year and with a new attraction, an AquaLoop by White Water West (see story in August issue). Lemasters said on the days the park has been open, attendance is exceeding expectations.

The same storms that hit northern Texas also hit southeastern Oklahoma where a record 28 inches were reported.

Frontier City, Oklahoma City, Okla., general manager Stephen Ball said storms caused the park to close early for three operating days, two of which were Saturdays.

A new ride, Larson International's Super Loop, was installed for this year and when the weather was good, attendance has been great.

"We are poised to have a very good year," Ball said.

Premier Parks, LLC, operates Frontier City as well as other Texas parks including Wet'n'Wild Splashtown in Houston. Ball said that water park, built on high ground, wasn't flooded and wasn't damaged.

"They had a lot of rain, but did have to close a few days due to bad weather," Ball said.

Animal Kingdom Avatar land progressing



The creative, collaborative process continues on a multi-year project as Disney's Animal Kingdom brings to life Pandora, based on the blockbuster film *Avatar*. Disney recently welcomed acclaimed director James Cameron to offices in Glendale, Calif. for a status report. Disney's creative teams, collaborating with the artists and designers at Lightstorm, are focused on all the land's iconic elements — from the magnificent floating mountains to the interactive bioluminescent forest, and even to the soaring banshees. The *Avatar*-inspired land will be part of the largest expansion in Disney's Animal Kingdom history at Walt Disney World Resort. COURTESY WALT DISNEY IMAGINEERING

Gold Medal Products Co. appoints Greg Miller to role of president

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Gold Medal Products Co. recently announced it has appointed Greg Miller as company president, effective May 18, 2015.



Miller

After serving 24 years as the current president, Dan Kroeger will retire from the position. However, as the company transitions, Kroeger will continue in his leadership with Gold Medal as CEO and chairman through 2016.

Miller comes to Gold Medal after serving as president of SVP Worldwide, an international leader in the sewing machine industry and parent company of the Singer sewing brand. His prior experience also includes progressively advancing roles of increasing responsibility with the Whirlpool Corporation. His last position held with Whirlpool was vice president/general manager of the North American Refrigeration Business Unit. With an extensive background in manufacturing, sales, marketing, product development and general management, he brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the future of Gold Medal.

Miller respectfully pays tribute to Gold Medal's success stating, "Dan's leadership and the strength of the entire team have positioned Gold Medal as the global leader in this industry. It is an honor to join the team where we will not only build for the future but also continue the strong 84-year heritage established by the founders, the Evans' family."

Kroeger relates, "I am confident that Greg is the right person to lead the next chapter in Gold Medal's success story. We welcome the fresh vision and enthusiasm that he brings. It's an exciting time with lots of opportunities on the horizon and Greg is poised to maximize the company's potential."

This will mark only the fourth president in the company's 84-year history.

Seen high above

Family Kingdom Amusement Park in Myrtle Beach, S.C. opened for the season on March 21 with the water park opening on May 23. Located on Ocean Boulevard, in the heart of Myrtle Beach, the amusement park has 38 rides for adults and children of all ages, including thrill rides, family rides, kiddie rides and go karts.

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MARKETWATCH



COMPANY	SYMBOL	MARKET	PRICE 06/10/15	HIGH 52-Week	LOW 52-Week
The Blackstone Group	BX	NYSE	42.01	44.43	26.56
Merlin Entertainments Group/ Legoland	MERL	LSE	443.70	443.70	3.277
Cedar Fair, L.P.	FUN	NYSE	58.22	60.64	42.75
Comcast Corp./ NBCUniversal Media	CMCSA	NASDAQ	58.23	60.85	49.33
	CMCSK	NASDAQ	57.76	60.24	49.26
The Walt Disney Company	DIS	NYSE	110.00	113.30	78.54
Fuji Kyoko Co., Ltd.	9010	TYO	1165.00	1298.00	975.00
Great Wolf Resorts	WOLF	NASDAQ	17.00	TBD	TBD
Haicahang Holdings Ltd.	2255HK	SEHK	1.83	2.13	1.02
Leofoo Development Co.	TW:2705	TSEC	11.35	13.70	10.30
MGM Resorts International	MGM	NYSE	19.53	27.64	17.25
SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc.	SEAS	NYSE	20.86	31.20	15.11
Shenzhen Overseas Chinese Town Co., Ltd. (OCT)	000069	SZSE	12.14	12.79	4.58
Six Flags Entertainment Co.	SIX	NYSE	47.48	51.09	31.77
Skyocean International	00593HK	SEHK	9.40	9.88	3.96
Tivoli A/S	DK:TIV	CSE	3850.00	3944.00	2941.00
Village Roadshow	VRL	ASX	5.98	8.17	5.08

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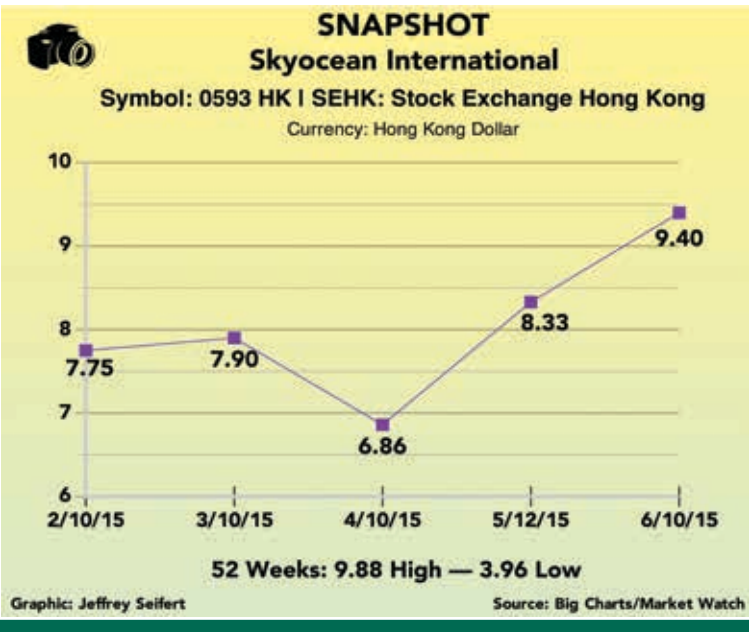
Worldwide Markets: **ASX**, Australian Securities Exchange; **CSE**, Copenhagen Stock Exchange; **LSE**, London Stock Exchange; **NYSE**, New York Stock Exchange; **NASDAQ**, National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations; **SEHK**, Hong Kong Stock Exchange; **SZSE**, Shenzhen Stock Exchange; **TSEC**, Taiwan Stock Exchange, Corp.; **TYO/TSE**, Tokyo Stock Exchange
—SOURCES: Bloomberg.com; Wall Street Journal

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West Coast	\$3.001	- \$0.898
California	\$3.217	- \$0.857

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BUSINESS WATCH

DreamEast inks agreement with Palace Ent.

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — On May 20, **DreamEast Entertainment Co. Ltd.**, a subsidiary of **Skyocean International Holdings** (00593.HK), signed a strategic cooperation agreement with U.S.-based **Palace Entertainment**. Under the agreement, Palace Entertainment would supply consulting services and strategic suggestions, covering market analysis, project planning and intellectual property rights, for the amusement park and resort projects of DreamEast theme park. The cooperation will be of great importance for the market research and implementation of the DreamEast theme park project, and for facilitating the realization of the DreamEast objective to "introduce Chinese culture to the world."

Palace Entertainment owns and operates 22 amusement parks, water parks, animal parks and family entertainment centers across the United States. Established in 1998, Palace Entertainment was acquired by the **Parques Reunidos Group**, the second largest theme park operator in Europe, in 2007.

DreamEast, a cultural and entertainment brand of Skyocean International Holdings was established by Skyocean to comprehensively enter the cultural industry as a result of research and practice over 12 years. Centering on intellectual properties of Chinese culture, it is devoted to integrating global talents, technologies and advanced management concepts, and the construction of DreamEast Culture Town, a complete cultural industry chain platform running through the creation, exhibition and experience of cultural entertainment. —PR Newswire

Firestone Financial purchased by Berkshire Hills

NEEDHAM, Mass. — **Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc.** (NYSE: BHLB) announced on May 22, the signing of a definitive agreement for the acquisition of privately held **Firestone Financial Corp.** as an operating subsidiary of **Berkshire Bank**. Based in Needham, Massachusetts, Firestone is a nationwide, long-standing commercial specialty finance company serving the amusement, fitness, vending and laundry industries.

"We are excited to be joining the Berkshire team," said Firestone CEO **David Cohen**. "With Berkshire's resources behind us, we believe we can be a significant contributor to the continued growth and profitability of this organization. With the support of Berkshire Bank, we will be able to offer our thousands of customers additional services to help facilitate their continued growth."

"Firestone is a terrific fit for Berkshire Bank," stated Berkshire CEO **Michael Daly**. "The strength of the management team and their conservative approach to credit has made them into a solid performing finance company. Our strategic decision to complement our strong asset based lending platform with this specialty finance business, enables us to further diversify our assets while expanding our client offerings. We look forward to adding Firestone's expertise to our organization and to taking advantage of the synergies available through this acquisition."

On March 31, 2015, Firestone had approximately \$190 million in loans outstanding spread across multiple industries and geographies. Borrowers are widely dispersed with no state comprising more than 11 percent of the outstanding balance and the largest borrower representing just 1.2 percent of outstandings.

Firestone has been in business for 50 years and is led by industry veterans **David S. Cohen** and **Scott A. Cooper**, both of whom joined the company in the 1980's. The senior team has extensive experience in the markets they serve and will continue to run the business post-transaction.

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Disney Store opens in Shanghai, China

SHANGHAI, China — **Disney Store** opened the doors on May 20 of its flagship store in the popular Lujiazui area of Pudong, Shanghai, China. The landmark store is the largest retail space of any Disney Store in the world featuring 5,000 square meters of immersive shopping experiences and innovative product, and also features an outdoor plaza.

"We couldn't be more delighted to open our first Disney Store in China, in Shanghai," said Paul Candland, president **The Walt Disney Company**, Asia-Pacific region. "Disney Store plays a critical role in how millions around the world experience our brand and allows kids, young adults and families to have a uniquely fun and immersive experience while shopping for their favorite Disney, Pixar, Marvel and Star Wars products," he added.

With an estimated 40 million tourists visiting the Lujiazui area each year, the Disney Store, with its unique product range and entertaining, immersive and innovative design elements, is set to become a world-class destination and meeting point among locals contributing to Shanghai's reputation as a family, business, cultural, entertainment and tourism destination.

—PR Newswire

Magic Memories delivers Down Under

OXENFORD, Australia — **Magic Memories** recently announced that it has provided another innovative guest experience in partnership with Australia's largest theme park operator, **Village Roadshow Theme Parks**.

The Queenstown, New Zealand-based company developed a completely overhauled product for the **Australian Outback Spectacular Experience** on Australia's Gold Coast, to coincide with the launch of their High Country Legends dinner show in late 2014.

Magic Memories was briefed to create a transition zone at the entry point to the arena that could showcase the product from the base of the mountains to the snow-filled High Country above. To accomplish this they developed an innovative system of five green-screen studios where guests could interact with show hosts and have their photos taken on the way into the arena. These photos are then transformed on to a range of backgrounds, ensuring that guests are able to come away with a personalized in-depth representation of the show.

"Australian Outback Spectacular has a very proud history of showcasing the best of Australia through beautiful design and choreography. Our creative brief was very simple — reflect this in the design of the photo experience and products," Magic Memories Chief Executive Officer Asia Pacific, Africa and China, Steve Taitoko said.

—PR Newswire

OBITUARIES

Storybook Land's co-founder Esther Fricano dies in N.J.

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP, New Jersey — **Esther Fricano** passed away peacefully on May 13, 2015 in the comfort of her home.

She was raised in Vineland, where she worked on the family farm with her parents and five siblings. She graduated from Vineland High School in 1940, one semester early, and near the top of her class. After graduation, she worked as a secretary and bookkeeper at Wene Chick Farm, based in Vineland.

Esther married John Fricano, Sr. in 1945. In 1955, she co-founded Storybook Land, in Egg Harbor Township, with her husband when their children were 2 and 6. They cleared the land and built some attractions with nursery rhyme themes. The two gradually expanded the park over the years, adding rides in the 1970s and expanding into more than 20 acres today. Esther handled the decorating and furnishing of the displays and buildings at Storybook Land. She would dress up as Mother Goose to greet the children, or be in the snack bar cooking lunch or scooping ice cream for the park patrons. She ded-



Fricano

icated herself to the business and used her secretarial experience to handle all the office work associated with running an amusement park.

She loved dolls. Her collection included Shirley Temple, Barbie and even Kate Middleton. The business continues to be run hands-on by family members, and Fricano welcomed input from her children and grandchildren.

As an Italian grandmother, Fricano was known for her hospitality and for being an excellent cook and baker. Friends, family, neighbors, and employees could stop by her home anytime at all, where she would always offer a cup of tea and cook huge family-style meals. Whether it was morning or night, nobody left the house hungry.

Esther was predeceased by her husband of 63 years, John Sr., her parents John and Jennie DeMarco, and her five siblings: Lewis DeMarco, Rose Spada, Frank DeMarco, Joseph DeMarco, and Mildred Crescenzo.

She will always be remembered by her two children: JoAnne and John Jr., and the late Iris Fricano; grandchildren: Jessica and John III; nephews and nieces; and all of her friends and employees at Storybook Land.

Florida carnival operator Milton Culpepper dies at 83

TAMPA, Florida — **Milton "Hickey" Culpepper**, 83, of Tampa, Florida, passed away on May 11, 2015.

Hickey was born on August 26, 1931 in Wright City, Oklahoma to the late Tom Culpepper and Flora Yardley-Culpepper. Hickey followed his life's passion into the carnival business where he owned and operated an outdoor amusement business. He was a lifetime member of the Showmen's League of America, The Greater Tampa Showmen's Association, and the International Independent Showmen's Association.



Culpepper

He will be remembered for his upbeat positive attitude and his love for "His Club." Hickey is survived by his beloved wife, Bonnie W. Culpepper; daughter, Patricia Yhnatko; brother, Charles Culpepper; granddaughters Marlo and Meagan Yhnatko.; and many extended family and friends. He is preceded in death by his parents, Tom and Flora Culpepper, grandmother Burns; and brothers, Dudley, Hubert, and Tommy Culpepper.

A memorial service was held on Thursday, May 14, 2015, at A Life Tribute Funeral Care- Tampa Chapel. Donations can be made to the COPD Foundation at, 3300 Ponce de Leon Blvd, Miami, Fla., 33134, so others can breathe better tomorrow.

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FASTTRACK

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For the fourth consecutive year, **Morgan's Wonderland** theme park has earned a certificate of excellence from TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel web site, for "earning exceptional traveler ratings over the past year." This recognition places Morgan's Wonderland in the top-performing 10 percent of all businesses worldwide on TripAdvisor, said **Stephen Kaufer**, TripAdvisor president and CEO. To qualify for the award, businesses must maintain an overall rating of four or higher, out of a possible five, as reviewed by travelers on TripAdvisor, and must have been listed on TripAdvisor for at least 12 months.

A former **Holiday World** performer who finished fourth in this year's *American Idol* competition visited the park on June 2, 2015 to meet fans and sign autographs. **Rayvon Owen** performed in the park's Rejoice! show as well as the Legacy acappella group in 2011. Also a songwriter, his "Brand New Day" is featured in this year's EPIC Praise show at Holiday World.

Virginia's **Busch Gardens'** epic 40-year journey is being explored in a specially-commissioned 40-minute documentary — *40 Years of Fun: The Story of Busch Gardens* — that brings together past and current park executives and some of the park's most enthusiastic fans to talk about their experiences. The piece explores the park's humble roots as a hospitality tour and its gradual transformation into a modern theme park with old-world charm. Limited quantities of the commemorative DVD *40 Years of Fun: The Story of Busch Gardens* will be available for purchase at merchandise shops throughout the theme park, including The Emporium, Tempesto shop and Das Festhaus.

The *Huffington Post* recently named Maine's **Funtown Splashtown USA** as one of the best amusement parks in the United States. Other well-known parks on the list include **Universal Studios Florida**, **Cedar Point**, and **Hersheypark**. "As a family-owned park in New England, we work within our means to provide a great experience for guests of all ages. This list shows that our brand is becoming more known every year," said **Cory Hutchinson**, park general manager.

DelGrosso's Amusement Park opened for its 68th season in May and has plenty on tap for guests including a new ride, the ARM Rock Star, along with a new Ring A Bottle game in Kid's Kingdom and new food items (Deep Fried Oreos, Kunzler Jumbo All Beef Hotdogs and Jalapeño Cheddar Hotdogs, refillable soda cups). "We are so excited to be kicking off our 68th Season of family fun," says **Carl Crider Jr.**, general manager of DelGrosso's Amusement Park. "Our staff has been hard at work for months preparing for the season, and we are excited to get the summer fun started."

Moody Gardens celebrated Memorial Day weekend in grand style with the debut of the SpongeBob SubPants Adventure in the

Discovery Pyramid. The SpongeBob SubPants Adventure is a one-of-a-kind interactive experience that allows guests to go on a submarine voyage to explore the world of Bikini Bottom with the help of their captain, Patrick Star. Visitors are able to choose their path through the wild and silly deep-sea adventure and have real-time conversations with Patrick. The attraction takes visitors from digital to real time through exciting 4D sensory elements which brings the adventure to life through scents, bubbles and bouncing beach balls.

Busch Gardens Tampa and Adventure Island crank up the heat this summer with extended hours in the dark and live entertainment. The thrills come out at night at Busch Gardens through August 16 during "Summer Nights!" The award-winning Kinetix show returns with rock-fueled music and acrobatics at 9 p.m. on Gwazi Field, followed by a fireworks show every night. Busch Gardens is open until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays throughout "Summer Nights!" When the sun goes down, the fun continues at Adventure Island through August 8 with "Island Nights!," which will include extended park hours, island entertainment, larger-than-life sand sculptures and a family-friendly sunset celebration.

Kennywood Park's Jack Rabbit, a wooden coaster built in 1920 by legendary designer John Miller, marks 95 years of thrilling riders this season. To celebrate the birthday of the fifth-oldest roller coaster in the world, Kennywood fanatic **Vic Kleman** embarked on 95 consecutive rides of the Jack Rabbit on Sunday, May 24. The 82-year-old Kleman's marathon ride began at 10:53 a.m. and he completed his final ride at 7:17, taking a total of 8:24 to complete. Kleman did not get out of his seat once during his daylong ride. "I feel great!" Kleman said shortly after finishing his run. "I made sure to move my legs throughout the day to keep from getting stiff after sitting so long."

Tweetsie Railroad is known by generations of families for its Wild West adventure. What many people may be surprised to learn is that North Carolina's first theme park has a long and rich history, which it celebrates each year with Railroad Heritage Weekend. Highlights of this year's event, which will take place August 29-30, 2015, include tours of the Tweetsie Railroad Train Shop and a special ride on Tweetsie's historic steam locomotives.

A global culinary journey celebrating 20 years of the **Epcot** International Food & Wine Festival will tantalize taste buds Sept. 25-Nov. 16, at **Walt Disney World Resort**. The 2015 festival will welcome celebrity chefs, debut new marketplace tastes from around the world and celebrate guests' favorite dining traditions. Disney chefs and festival programmers are whipping up plenty of surprises to celebrate the 20th annual event. New wine tastings, rockin' parties and culinary experiences built around the 20-year milestone will bring together loyal festival fans and first-timers.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Peter Schnabel announces new company

VICTORIA, B.C.—Amusement industry veteran **Peter Schnabel** has launched **CAVU Designwerks**, a global media based attraction provider. Joining him in the venture are **Daryl White**, president, and **Tao Huai**, president, Asia, as well as **Harold Hudson**, senior advisor.

At the IAAPA Asia Attractions Expo in Hong Kong, CAVU Designwerks will present the company's portfolio of next generation media based attractions, which include such products as Twist 'n Shoot interactive dark ride, Midnight Express touring tram simulator and Storm Chaser Multi Axis Dark Ride.

Daryl White is responsible for operations including oversight of the design, development and execution of all attraction engineering systems. Tao Huai will be responsible for relationships with CAVU manufacturers and handle business development in Asia Hudson, a well known and highly respected technical authority, is supporting CAVU with quality assurance and safety.

"CAVU is taking a fresh look at attraction design, and the manufacturing process. Our rides will offer our customers exceptionally high value," said Schnabel. "I've built a very capable team and together we are launching CAVU Designwerks. Long-term relationships with the best creative partners and manufacturers allow us to offer next generation media-based attractions."

• www.cavudw.com

Boomers! blasts into Houston

HOUSTON, Texas — **Boomers! Houston** (formerly Mountasia) has opened on June 5 as the first Boomers! location in Texas. Guests at new Boomers! Houston will see a refreshed arcade building that features an expanded café and seating capacity that has more than doubled. There's also a sports bar-style counter, with stools and multiple televisions. The company has applied for a license to serve a selection of beer and wine to adult guests. In the arcade, guests will see new carpeting throughout, a wide selection of a new games and a refreshed look for the indoor party and meeting room.

Al Weber, Jr., CEO of **Apex Parks Group**, comments, "This complete renovation of the park will make the new Boomers! a favorite place for Houstonians to visit for a fun and enjoyable time with family and friends."

In addition to the newly remodeled interior, Boomers! is also introducing a ticket-free, token-free card system for attractions and games.

Elitch Gardens sold to Denver investor group

DENVER, Colo. — **Elitch Gardens** theme and water park has been sold by **CNL Lifestyle Properties** to a Denver investor group comprised of **Kroenke Sports & Entertainment**, **Revesco Properties** and **Second City Real Estate**, through its joint entity **KSE Elitch Gardens/Revesco/Second City, LLLP**. The purchase price of the deal was not made public.

"We are thrilled to be the new owners of Denver's Elitch Gardens," said Revesco Properties CEO **Rhys Duggan** on behalf of the group. "This was a rare opportunity to acquire a great asset in such a thriving city."

Under a new contract, the owners plan to retain **Premier Parks, LLC** as the operator of Elitch Gardens. Premier Parks will continue to oversee the park's daily operations. Currently, there are no planned changes in the existing park staff.

While no specifics were given, KSE Elitch Gardens/Revesco/Second City, LLLP is planning multi-million dollar upgrades to the property in the coming years.

Sanrio, Universal adding Hello Kitty retail

TORRANCE, Calif. — **Sanrio**, the global lifestyle brand best known for beloved pop icon **Hello Kitty**, and **Universal Parks & Resorts** have announced their partnership to develop Hello Kitty interactive retail experience shops scheduled to open later this year at **Universal Orlando Resort** and in the future at **Universal Studios Hollywood**.

The shops will mark **Hello Kitty's** official retail debut at theme parks in North America and offer specialty merchandise including stationery, home goods, apparel, accessories and collectibles.

—PR Newswire



NEWS & NOTES

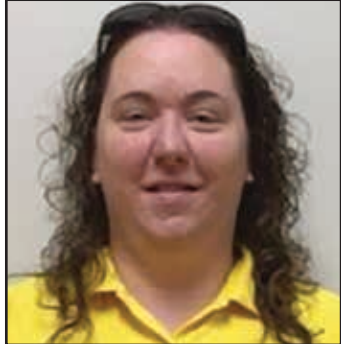
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AIMS names Karen Strahl as Certification Program Manager

Meet **Karen Strahl** who has recently been named Certification Program Manager at AIMS International. Karen is an industry veteran and a long time supporter of both AIMS and the Safety Seminar. In her new role, she will manage the documentation and registration of all AIMS certifications.

Karen lives in Indiana where she is employed as the Safety Manager at Holiday World. She and her husband, Sean, who also works at Holiday World as Maintenance Planner, have two children. When asked what she likes to do in her spare time, Karen said, "Visit other theme parks, of course!" Please join us in welcoming Karen to AIMS.



Strahl

Should you have any questions about AIMS certification, testing, CEUs, renewals, etc., Karen is the one who can help you navigate the process.

You can contact Karen Strahl, AIMS Certification Program manager at certs@aimsintl.org.

—Karen Oertley, AIMS

2016 AIMS Safety Seminar update

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Oertley

The **AIMS Safety Seminar Education Committee** met in May to plan the course curriculum for the 2016 AIMS Safety Seminar to be held, January 10-15 at the Doubletree by Hilton at SeaWorld, Orlando. The 2016 Education committee, led by Chairman **Emmett Peter** and AIMS Safety Seminar Manager, **Holly Coston**, includes: **Rick Achard, Bob Conway, Linda Freeman, Mike Martin, Mike Neace, Mike Pastor, John Rigglesman, Michelle Reuter, Tracy Shedd, Randy Vakiener, and Karen Oertley.**

"We are very excited about the upcoming Safety Seminar," said AIMS Safety Seminar Manager Holly Coston. "We continually work to improve and update our classes to stay current and topical as well as to offer the basics on safety education for maintenance, ride inspection, operations and aquatics. This year's committee had great suggestions for new

classes and instructors to add to our curriculum for 2016."

Safety at amusement parks and other entertainment venues is of utmost importance and the challenges to keep people safe from themselves, each other and their surroundings continue to evolve. Stay tuned for updates throughout the summer as instructors and classes are confirmed.

If you are planning your budget, seminar tuition will remain at \$595 for the full week of classes and includes course materials, CEUs, a completion certificate, our opening reception, two breaks and a full lunch every day. The nightly hotel rate is \$99. Registration will open in early September. Additional fees for testing and certification renewal can be found on the AIMS website at www.aimsintl.org where you can also add your name to our mailing list for updates and announcements on the 2016 Safety Seminar. For more information on the 2016 AIMS Safety Seminar, contact Holly Coston at h.coston@aimsintl.org.

On behalf of the AIMS Board of Directors and staff, have a wonderful FUN filled summer and stay SAFE!

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Walt Disney's original theme park parties hearty at 60

Disneyland reveals fun new facets for Diamond Celebration

AT: Dean Lamanna

dlamanna@amusementtoday.com

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Disneyland has launched its Diamond Celebration with the kind of fanfare that would have made Uncle Walt proud.

For six decades, Walt Disney's original park, together with the ever-expanding and evolving resort area around it, has explored the frontiers of immersive storytelling and entertainment technology — bringing exciting attractions and inventive entertainment to life for guests from around the world. This yearlong event presents both a nostalgic recap and a boost toward the property's future promise.

The Disneyland Resort's Diamond Celebration kicked off with a 24-hour party for the general public on May 22 after two days of media previews. Three new nighttime spectaculars are the primary markers of this major anniversary (which falls on July 17, to be exact), with special food and merchandise offerings, park décor touches, character costumes and attraction enhancements also carrying the theme.

Among the special guests and Disney executives appearing before the media were Bob Iger, chairman and CEO of The Walt Disney Company, and actor Neil Patrick Harris, co-hosts with Mickey Mouse of the new World of Color — Celebrate! The Won-



Commemorating the 60th anniversary of Walt Disney's original theme park, Disneyland Forever, a new fireworks presentation at the Disneyland Resort, uses both pyrotechnics and projection mapping to illuminate Main Street, U.S.A., and the sky above Sleeping Beauty Castle. PAUL HIFFMEYER/DISNEYLAND RESORT

derful World of Disney multimedia show at Disneyland's younger, adjacent sister park, Disney California Adventure (DCA).

"I just have always grown up with Disney on my brain and now that I have kids of my own, it's super great to be able to show them the things that excited me when I was a kid," Harris said.

Contrary to its own maturity, Disneyland hasn't lost an iota of its youthful vigor, emphasized fellow attendee Bob Chapek, chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

"When he originally unveiled his dream back in 1955,

Walt proclaimed that Disneyland would never be completed as long as there was imagination left in the world," Chapek said. "Time and again we've pushed the boundaries to fulfill that vision... [and] demonstrate the creativity and innovation for which Disney parks have become known around the world."

Mickey on the march

The Diamond Celebration continues to raise the creative bar with a flashy new parade, a new fireworks show at Disneyland and a dynamically revamped World of Color presentation at DCA — all carefully designed

to fuel a sense of wonder in Disneyland Resort guests.

"It's great fun to research and use technology to create these immersive worlds, knowing guests will see our classic stories in mesmerizing new ways," said Steve Davison, executive of parades and spectaculars for Walt Disney Imagineering Creative Entertainment. "It's going to bring Disneyland to life in ways they couldn't even imagine."

The special anniversary attractions:

• **Paint the Night** — This all-new electrical parade, in which Mickey Mouse "paints the night" with his vivid imagination, is a luminous musical extravaganza that delivers a flowing river of color along Main Street, U.S.A., with an array of Disney characters, floats and more than 1.5 million LED lights.

Tinker Bell leads the procession, and *Cars* film star Lightning McQueen races in with his buddy Mack Truck, who at 54 feet in length, makes a hefty impression. Anna and Elsa from *Frozen* glide through in a shimmering palace of ice and snow, while Cinderella, Rapunzel and beloved characters from *Monsters, Inc.*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Toy Story* also make appearances before Mickey and his pals create a breathtaking finale.

"I grew up with that parade and, at the start of my career, I worked for the original creator of the Main Street Electrical

Parade, Bob Jani," said Sayre Wiseman, executive producer for Walt Disney Imagineering Creative Entertainment. "This new parade has wonderful nods back to the original, but Paint the Night also has a whole new feel, plus amazing visuals and technology that are sure to wow our guests."

• **Disneyland Forever Fireworks** — Presented by Honda, this dazzling pyrotechnics display provides a street-to-sky audiovisual experience like nothing seen previously at Disneyland. Guests are surrounded by the worlds of timeless Disney tales — thanks to the largest installation of projection mapping technology in a Disney park and some surprising special effects.

One minute, guests are standing on Main Street, and the next, they could be stampeding across Simba's Pride Lands from *The Lion King*, dancing with King Louie from *The Jungle Book*, traveling "Under the Sea" with the Little Mermaid or flying over London with Peter Pan. The title character of *Finding Nemo* "swims" in the skies above Sleeping Beauty Castle as the Matterhorn is transformed into the fiery peak of Mt. Wana-hockaloogie from that film.

Two original songs enrich the fireworks show: the Disneyland Forever theme "Live the Magic" and an inspiring closing song, "A Kiss Goodnight," composed by Disney legend Richard M. Sherman and sung by Ashley Brown, star of the Broadway production of *Mary Poppins*.

"Walt Disney had a lot of heart, and 'A Kiss Goodnight,' is for him," Sherman said. "He's the one who came up with the idea of having fireworks at the end of the night. He wanted to give the folks who were leaving after a day at the park a little extra gift, and that was why he called it a little kiss goodnight.... After all these years, people still get a kiss goodnight, so this is very special for me."

• **World of Color — Celebrate! The Wonderful World of Walt Disney** — Neil Patrick Harris joins Mickey Mouse on a magical water canvas in this new version of the popular DCA nighttime spectacular. Both epic and intimate, it brings to life the remarkable history of Walt Disney and The Happiest Place on Earth with animated imagery,

► See DISNEY, page 47



Tinker Bell (above) lights the way in Paint the Night, Disneyland's Diamond Celebration successor to its iconic Main Street Electrical Parade. The after-dark spectacular features many beloved Disney characters, including Mack from the *Cars* movies (left), aglow in 1.5 million LED lights.

PAUL HIFFMEYER/
DISNEYLAND RESORT

►DISNEY

Continued from page 46

high-definition live-action film, fountains, lasers, special effects and a stirring musical score. Guests take an inspirational journey through Walt's imagination, during which they are reminded that if they never give up on their dreams, anything is possible.

Since its premiere in 2010, World of Color has used a groundbreaking "stage" of nearly one full acre of engineered superstructure, longer than a football field. Nearly 1,200 programmable fountains and a vast underwater grid with more than 20,000 points of control send water as high as 200 feet — higher than Mickey's Fun Wheel.

"There is so much wonderful humor plus heartfelt moments in the new World of Color," said Imagineering producer Sayre Wiseman. "Guests will want to see it again and again."

Diamond dazzle abounds

Aside from the major shows, the Diamond Celebration can be seen and enjoyed in many other obvious and subtle ways.

Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse and some of their friends, for example, have dressed up for the fete in sparkling costumes, while the iconic Sleeping Beauty Castle in Disneyland and Carthay Circle Theatre in DCA now glisten with diamond medallions. Six new "enchanted" window displays have also been created at the Main Street Emporium in Disneyland, and even resort cast members have been given added gleam with their Diamond Celebration name tags.

At Disneyland, guests can join a daily Diamond March-

Along up Main Street, U.S.A., with the Disneyland Band and Disney characters. The cavalcade concludes with a Diamond Sing-Along at Town Square. Also on Main Street, the Dapper Dans quartet invites guests to join Diamond Sing-Alongs, while the Straw Hatters band will encourage Diamond Dance-Alongs.

At DCA, guests can "Dream-Along" with Mickey Mouse and the Red Car News Boys, as Mickey shares a new song about his vision for the Happiest Place on Earth. When the Five & Dime arrive on Buena Vista Street, guests will find themselves dancing along with Dime, Goofy and the boys.

Mad T Party has returned to DCA and guests are invited down the rabbit hole to experience this nighttime bash inspired by Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* movie. The Mad T Party main stage features a live band performing contemporary and classic rock favorites, as well as newly mashed-up Disney tunes.

Souvenir, food and beverage offerings at both parks also reflect the big anniversary.

Diamond Celebration mementos encompassing more than 500 merchandise items are available, including apparel, accessories, art, collectibles, home décor, jewelry, pins and toys. Two "heady" highlights: a Mickey Mouse ear hat and a Minnie Mouse headband adorned with rhinestones.

Aside from limited-edition pin sets, collectors will find limited-release, crystal-embellished Vinylmation and designer items from a number of noted brands and artists.

On the food and beverage front, restaurants and food carts in Disneyland and DCA are offering cupcakes and drinks spe-



World of Color — Celebrate! The Wonderful World of Walt Disney, hosted by actor Neil Patrick Harris and Mickey Mouse, is a revamped, 60th anniversary version of the popular outdoor multimedia show that debuted at Disney California Adventure in 2010.

SCOTT BRINEGAR/DISNEYLAND RESORT

cially created for the Diamond Celebration and served in colorful souvenir anniversary containers.

Lemon-flavored cupcakes can be found at the Jolly Holiday Bakery Café on Main Street in Disneyland and orange-flavored ones at the Fiddler, Fifer and Practical Café on Buena Vista Street in DCA.

A Pomegranate Silver Sparkler, topped with lemon-lime foam and garnished with silver flakes, is being served at the Jolly Holiday Bakery Café. At DCA's Lucky Fortune Cookery, a special Lucky Fortune Tea containing mango, pineapple and passion fruit flavors is the anniversary sip of choice.

Diamond Celebration beverages also are available at Disneyland Resort hotel locations: a Longboard Lemonade at the PCH Grill in Disney's Paradise Pier Hotel, and a Wild Raspberry Rapids Lemonade at White Water Snacks in Disney's Grand

Californian Hotel & Spa.

Enhancing the classics

Further amplifying the anniversary fun, attractions across both parks at the Disneyland Resort — including the Haunted Mansion, Matterhorn Bobsleds, Peter Pan's Flight and the newly re-themed Grizzly Peak Airfield — have undergone regular refurbishments and returned with added magic.

At Disneyland, the Hatbox Ghost, an audio-animatronic character that first appeared in the Haunted Mansion for a short period around the time the attraction opened in 1969, has materialized once again. Guests will discover the ghost just before they descend into the cemetery, where it performs an eerie trick.

The Matterhorn Bobsleds roller coaster and Peter Pan's Flight have returned with new special effects, as well.

The audio-animatronic

Abominable Snowman, now more dynamic and ferocious, appears within the Matterhorn in surprising ways — including a new scene that reveals some lost treasure the creature has been hoarding inside the mountain.

Peter Pan's Flight now features a reimagined nursery scene in which the Darling children discover the magic of flight as Tinker Bell flits overhead, sprinkling them with Pixie Dust. A moonlit London Town and an all-aglow Never Land have been given new layers of detail.

Meanwhile, at DCA, Grizzly Peak has expanded into the former Condor Flats area with new building exteriors, landscape features and additional touches. A quick-service food location, Smokejumpers Grill, opened in March, was inspired by the firefighters who combat wildfires in the California forests. Lush pine trees bring cool areas of shade to the expanded area, making guests feel as if they have been transported to California's High Sierra.

Altogether, those who visit the Disneyland Resort during the Diamond Celebration "will be immersed in innovation, enchanted by wonderful narratives and reminded of the incredible legacy of Walt Disney," said John Addis, show director for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Creative Entertainment.

Legendary Disney film actor Dick Van Dyke, who was looking forward to seeing the *Mary Poppins* sequence in the Disneyland Forever fireworks show, concurred. "I wish Walt were here [to experience it]," he said.

•Disneyland.com



The Hatbox Ghost has reappeared in Disneyland's Haunted Mansion for the park's Diamond Celebration; the legendary figure briefly materialized around the opening of the attraction in 1969. The Abominable Snowman now makes for a more dynamic and ferocious audio-animatronic character inside the classic Matterhorn Bobsleds coaster ride.

PAUL HIFFMEYER/DISNEYLAND RESORT





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2015 Golden Ticket Awards Agenda

Friday, September 11, 2015

12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Hotel Arrival and Event Registration*

Location: Park Lane Hotel, 36 Central Park S., New York City, N.Y. 10019

Pick up Golden Ticket registration and welcome packet including credentials, event schedule, gift bag and more.

*Late arrivals will be checked in directly at each park location.

6:00 p.m.

Guests are Escorted to Victorian Gardens at Wollman Rink in Central Park

GTA attendees meet in hotel lobby and begin the short walk to Victorian Gardens for the evening events.

(Guides will be dressed in costumes and will be holding signs to help direct guests.)

6:30 p.m.

Victorian Gardens Cocktail Party Followed by Dinner Reception and Entertainment

(Roaring 20s themed event with period costumes and jazz band entertainment.)

Guests are encouraged to get inspired and come adorned in 20s themed attire and accessories.

Saturday, September 12, 2015

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Downtown Tour

Narrated by licensed NYC tour guides who know the city inside and out, this hop on/hop off excursion on a double-decker bus takes you through Greenwich Village, Little Italy, Chinatown, Wall Street and the Financial District, Battery Park City, South Street Seaport, the Lower East Side, along with Rockefeller Center, the United Nations building, Carnegie Hall, the Broadway Theater District and more. Along the way, you'll have the chance to explore the streets, visit the shops and enjoy a vast array of authentic cuisines.

Hop on/hop off passes will be provided to each guest upon request — tour length 2 hours (without hopping on and off).

Tours will depart across the street from the Park Lane Hotel.

3:00 p.m.

Board Private GTA Shuttle Bus to Luna Park, Coney Island 4:00 p.m. Arrival

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Free Exploration and Rides Opportunities

GTA credentials will be provided for access to all rides and activities.

6:00 p.m.

Pre-Award Cocktail Party on the famous Coney Island Boardwalk

Location: Place to Beach, 1301 Boardwalk W., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224.

7:00 p.m.

Guests Walk One Block to Gargiulo's Restaurant

7:30 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.

2015 Golden Ticket Award Presentation

Location: Gargiulo's Restaurant, 2911 W. 15th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11224

Awards will be in conjunction with a formal sit down dinner featuring a "Golden Age of Coney Island" theme.

Entertainment provided by RWS & Associates.

10:00 p.m.

GTA Attendees Begin Walk Back to Coney Island Boardwalk for Private Viewing of Fireworks Beginning at 10:30 p.m.

Following fireworks, attendees will board private GTA shuttle buses back to the Park Lane Hotel.

Images of Modern America Kings Dominion celebrates park's history

Review: Jeffrey L. Seifert
jseifert@amusementtoday.com

Kings Dominion was built as a direct result of the success of Kings Island, which opened in 1972 just outside of Cincinnati, Ohio. That park, a project of the Taft Broadcasting Company and Top Value Enterprises, which comprised Family Leisure Centers (FLC), was built to replace Cincinnati's Coney Island which Taft had purchased in 1969 with the intent to move the park away from the flood plain of the Ohio River.

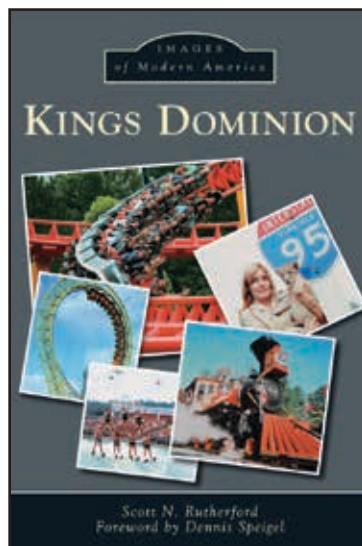
Kings Island was successful as both a theme park and as a cross-promotional tool for Taft's Hanna-Barbera Productions division. So much so, that FLC decided it needed another similar venue. A site in Doswell, Virginia, was chosen for its close proximity to the population centers of Richmond, Norfolk and Washington D.C.

The Mid-Atlantic themer is the subject of *Kings Dominion*, a new Arcadia Modern Images of America book. This newer format, titled *Modern Images of America*, is printed in color, with only a handful of vintage black and white photographs. Scott Rutherford, a well-known writer, photographer and historian has been a staff writer and photographer for *Amusement Today* since it was founded in 1997. Rutherford has authored multiple books on the subject of amusement parks.

The 96-page book is divided into six chapters, providing a pictorial account of the 40-year history of the park through the use of 160 stunning images.

Chapter one features preview and construction photos, including a view of the Eiffel Tower nearing completion — but, painted with red primer, not the now-familiar light teal color used at both Kings parks. Chapter two covers the grand opening and first year of the park. Pictures here include an incredibly long line of guests on opening day, grand opening festivities, a brand-spanking new Rebel Yell along with the old Galaxi roller coaster. By the end of the first season, more than 1.5 million visitors had passed through the gates, far exceeding projections.

Chapter three covers the



park's continued popularity and growth. In 1976 alone, several new rides were added to help increase capacity. That same year filming for a new movie, *Rollercoaster*, took place at the park, and in 1977 a coaster marathon was held to help promote the film. 1977 also brought the introduction of a revolutionary new ride, King Kobra, from German-manufacturer Anton Schwarzkopf.

In 1978 the park began construction of the massive Lost World project, which included the addition of three rides inside a 170-foot tall fabricated mountain. The Land of Dooz, a unique Arrow mine train/dark ride, utilized coaster track and a chain lift, but slowly descended through the mountain like a dark ride.

In late 1983, several senior officials from Taft entertainment purchased the theme park division forming the Kings Entertainment Company (KECO). Chapter four covers the nine years under KECO leadership.

By the mid-1980s Gulf and Western Industries (Gulf+Western), began a restructuring process with a focus on the entertainment industry. The conglomerate began shedding non entertainment assets and renamed itself Paramount Communications. Much as Taft did in the 1970s, Paramount saw theme parks as an avenue to promote its motion picture empire and acquired KECO in 1992. When the park opened for the 1993 season it was called Paramount's Kings Dominion.

Paramount brought dramatic changes to the park, as illustrated by the photographs in chapter five. Perhaps one of



Above, the park's Eiffel Tower was part of a massive \$60 million construction project. Below, missing since the 1990s, the singing mushrooms returned for the 40th celebration. COURTESY ARCADIA PUBLISHING



the most surprising is a picture of *Star Trek* characters — Star Fleet officers, Romulans and Klingons, side by side, gracing the park. Paramount brought to the park themes from its various movies — many famous and time-honored, and some that were no more than a flash in the pan.

Other photos in chapter five highlight the addition of two more franchise-themed coasters — Outer Limits Flight of Fear and The Italian Job: Stunt Track. These two LIM launched coasters, both from Premier Rides, debuted 10 years apart. Two years after the opening of Outer Limits, Paramount transformed the former Lost World Mountain, its attractions having

closed one by one, with the last — an Arrow flume ride, The Haunted River — closing in 1995. The mountain was transformed into a volcano, and another launched coaster, the Intamin-built Volcano, The Blast Coaster, erupted from the top of the mountain. The final photo in chapter five shows fireworks behind the Eiffel Tower near the end of the 2006 season — the last under the Paramount era.

Paramount Parks was sold to Cedar Fair. Chapter six begins with the first of the Cedar Fair years.

When the park opened for the 2007 season, the park's name returned to its original moniker, Kings Dominion. Cedar Fair decided to quickly

divest the park of the Paramount properties and by the start of the 2008 season every ride that had any connection to Paramount had been rethemed or unthemed and given a new name. Cedar Fair added a large B&M floorless coaster as well as a large nonlooping mega coaster. The latter was in the form of a 305-foot Intamin Giga Coaster, Intimidator 305.

Chapter six illustrates the changes Cedar Fair brought to park: New paint, restoration of rides, improved landscaping, and a renewed emphasis on cleanliness and overall aesthetics. Cedar Fair incorporated the Charles Schultz Peanuts characters including Snoopy and Charlie Brown.

The return of the long-lost, iconic, singing mushrooms — updated with the latest technology and now accompanied by a piano-playing frog endeared many park enthusiasts, some of whom only experienced the original from a brief appearance in the movie *Rollercoaster*. Cedar Fair also embarked on a multi-year rehabilitation of the park's historic 1917 PTC carousel (PTC No. 44) completed in time for the 40th celebration. Another famous landmark, the popular floral clock was completely rebuilt. Chapter six closes with another photo of fireworks behind the Eiffel Tower, this time from new owners Cedar Fair.

Images of Modern America Kings Dominion offers a remarkable collection of vintage and modern images to illustrate the rich history of this famous Virginia institution. The book retails for \$22.99 and is available at local bookstores, online retailers or Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com, (888) 313-2665.



The original Shenandoah log flume (above left) still operates at the park, but the later flume in the Lost World was removed in 1995. COURTESY ARCADIA PUBLISHING



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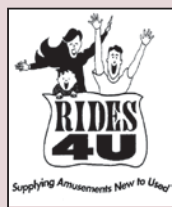
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